GEETA VIHAR

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[Geeta rationally reproduced in its continuous Interlinked Shlokas]

By

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GEETA VIHAR

INTRODUCTION

I

URGE OF THE MODERN MIND TO GRASP THE ESOTERIC SENSE OF THE GEETA

Is it not superfluous to write anything on Geeta in the face of numerous commentaries written by great spiritualists and intellectuals like Shankar, Ramanuja and many others ?

There are no doubt numerous commentaries of Geeta written by highest intellectualists like Shankar, Ramanuja, Gnyaneshwar and several others of the middle ages, and by Mrs. Annie Besant, Tilak, Krishna Prem, Shri Aurobindo and others in the modern age. But the wonder is that there are at times cardinal differences in their interpretations of one and the same verse. There are many schools of Indian Philosophy, and the student of each school has tried to support his own theory by giving different interpretations of one and the same idea. Each school however claims to give the original sense which the writer of the Geeta intended to convey.

The commentaries of the middle ages are written in the language and religious thoughts current in those days. With the advance of time there are changes in the thoughts of the age and even in the structure of language. The present age is not one of dogmatic beliefs, but demands at each step, a logical and scientific explanation of dogmatic expressions. Being in close touch with the western sceptic and scientific mind, the modern man demands such rational explanations of old scriptures in current language of the day, which would remove his sceptic doubts with regard to various dogmatic terms used in the text. In addition, he is

anxious to know what the writer of the Geeta truly meant to convey in each verse, and thereby to remove the confusion created in his mind by diverse interpretations. This is the reason why the commentaries of the modern writers appeal more to the modern searching mind even though it maintains greatest respect for the old ones too.

Many existing commentaries including the modern ones are too comprehensive and terse for an ordinary intellect to pursue. There is thus always a need of simple, concise interpretations of the Geeta to suit the modern thought, and that too in the light of the natural sense conveyed by the words used in the verses without the least attempt to distort or to stretch their original significance to suit one's pre-conceived theory or philosophy

II

HOW TO AVOID DIVERSE INTERPRETATIONS OF GEETA

To comprehend the real import of the verses of the Geeta, it seems necessary that there should be no distortion in the interpretation of technical, philosophical terms used in the text Is there any way to prevent this tendency of the commentators ?

There is one sure technique to prevent this error. It cannot be conceived that the author of such a high class scripture as Geeta would have used any technical term implying different meanings when used in separate contexts in different chapters. It is noteworthy that such terms are self-explanatory when considered etymologically with their Sanskrit root meaning The self-expression conveyed by the root meaning of the term may be its natural interpretation. If such natural interpretation fits in at every context where the same term is used, one may arrive nearer

to the sense which the author intended to convey by that term in different contexts.

It is the common practice of most modern writers on Science, Politics, Economics, History or other subjects, to use a technical term in the same sense throughout, wherever used in any context. This is prominently so in legislative enactments. Every technical term is defined to convey a particular sense, and it becomes imperative to see that all ingredients of the term as defined are present, before arriving at its correct significance, wherever it occurs in any context. If such a test be applied as far as possible in the interpretation of the verses of the Geeta, one may expect to arrive nearer to the true sense of the context, imported by a particular technical term occurring in different chapters. This may limit the possibility of separate and diverse interpretations of the same term, to coincide with the diverse preconceived theories of the commentator.

III

GEETA NOT A COLLECTION OF DIVERSE PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHTS

Is there any continuous theme in the discourse of the Geeta from the first chapter to the last, or does it contain merely a disconnected collection of religious thoughts prevalent at the time when it was spoken or written ?

It is beyond conception that a genius who spoke or wrote Geeta had no system or a well-defined theme of his own, while giving to the world such a spectacular description of the entire existence and its relation with the one Divine. The Geeta stands unique and without parallel in the world's philosophical literature. It cannot be assumed for a moment

that the eminent author intended to make a piece-meal collection of various conflicting religious concepts of the time, such as Sankhya, pure Karma Yoga, pure Gyan Yoga, pure Bhakti Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Tantra Yoga or other systems, as some superficial readers are led to suppose The Geeta cannot in that case claim any originality of thought

The Geeta in fact lays down an original philosophical thought of its own, though in dealing with it a synthesis of other religious thoughts automatically occurs Other philosophical thoughts had independent conceptions of their own, and were considered irreconcilable and were almost at war with one another. The Geeta Yoga is quite distinct and independent of the technical ideologies and practices of other yogas, which have no doubt a synthetic place in its integrality In Chapter VI Verse 46 the Geeta stresses on the superiority of its own yoga, over the other yogas, and directs Arjun to become a Geeta Yogi It says, "A Yogi (of Geeta) is superior to Tapa Yogi (Hatha Yoga) and in my opinion superior to Gyana Yogi (of Patanjali Yoga) and to Karma Yogi. Therefore O Arjun ! become a (Geeta) Yogi." (6 46)

This point of view about the Geeta's continuous theme of its special yoga must be prominently borne in mind for a correct grasp of that theme dealt with progressively and logically from verse to verse and chapter to chapter Each verse must have a relevant connection with the one following it, and similarly each chapter must be a progressive continuity of the same theme If one cannot trace the logic and the running thought of the writer from verse to verse and from chapter to chapter, but considers each verse and chapter independent of the other or a stray collection of isolated contemporary religious thoughts he cannot be said to have entered into the spirit of the magnanimous discourse

Thus for a correct appreciation of the scheme of Geeta's thought intended to be described by the author, two tests must be kept in view :—

(1) Sense of a technical philosophical term must as far as possible continue to be the same where-ever that term occurs.

(2) There must emerge a logical chain of the one main theme developed by the author from verse to verse and chapter to chapter.

IV

BRAHMAN AND PARA-BRAHMAN

What is the underlying significance of the terms "Brahman" and "Para-Brahman" (Lower Brahman and Higher Brahman) ?

This is rather an impossible attempt of human brain to conceive what Brahman is. The ancient sages and seers have given some idea of Brahman in paradoxical terms as it is a condition indescribable in words. Geeta describes three status or conditions of Brahman existence in Ch. XVII-Verse 23, as AUM Brahman, TAT Brahman and SAT Brahman.

(i) *AUM Brahman* : This is the Supreme Divine status, which *is not only Cosmic pervasion but also Supra-Cosmic* comprising innumerable Cosmic existences of which ours is one. It is an unmanifested condition but, in manifestation, it assumes the positive existent pervasion. This Supreme Divine condition is therefore described as neither existence nor non-existence (Sat Na Sat), and being beyond manifestation is spoken of as Para-Brahman or Higher Brahman.

(ii) *TAT Brahman*. The word Brahman implies the sense of spreading out or pervading. In manifestation the Supreme AUM Brahman becomes a positive existence (SAT), and appears as pervading itself in the Cosmos. This positive Cosmic existence is said to possess three principal qualities of Existence (Sat), Consciousness (Chit) and Bliss (Anand), and is, therefore, described as Sachchidanand Brahman. In the initial stage this Sachchidanand Brahman though a Cosmic pervasion is immobile and potentially static, devoid of any movement or change, and is therefore, spoken of as Akshar Brahman. This Akshar status being the source and beyond Kshar existence of miltiplicity, is signified (Nirdesho) as TAT Brahman (That Brahman) by the denizens of this world of lower existence.

(iii) *SAT Brahman* The Akshar Brahman which is the subtlest existence, in course of manifestation releases, His potential Adya Shakti or original spiritual energy (Moola Prakriti), and there comes into being the dynamic Kshar Brahman of concrete existence designated as Sat Brahman or concrete Pervasive Existence.

Sachchidananda Brahman has thus two facets, one as Akshar Brahman and the other as Kshar Brahman, or as Impersonal Brahman and as Personal Brahman. Shri Aurobindo in Synthesis of Yoga, page 447, says that Sachchidanand is a status of Divine manifestation It has two aspects static and dynamic, or, Impersonal and Personal. These are the manifested status of Puroshattam, the Supreme.

Thus we find that the Sachchidanand Brahman spreads out infinitely and pervades to form the Cosmos through each of Its three aspects of SAT, CHIT and ANAND. The pervasion of Sat aspect is the pervasion of the Cosmic objective energy (Dravya Shakti) resulting in the formation of Brahmand or Cosmic Egg consisting of seven planes and their matter. This is the first attempt of Brahma to create the worlds, but He found that the Atomic matter of

these planes did not combine or aggregate to make forms. He then prayed Vishnu to help him in furthering the creative process. Then descended the pervasion of the Chit aspect of Vishnu resulting in the infusion of Spiritual Principle of Consciousness and Life in the Atomic stuff of each plane. The infusion of this Cosmic spiritual principle led to the creation of multiple forms and beings in the Cosmic planes. The spiritual urge involved in the Inconcient Matter led to the evolution of matter into plant and animal life, under the stress of Cosmic Life Principle. The plant or animal life had no individual Will of its own and was unable to evolve further by personal effort. There was then the descent of the third Anand or Siva aspect of Sachchidanand, which brought into being the microcosmic subjective principle of Jivatma to infuse the sense of *Individuality resulting in the evolution of animal* into Man. Further details on this subject are dealt with in Chapter IX Verse 4 to 8 of the Geeta. This is how the Cosmic Sachchidananda pervades the Brahmand and is the Source of the entire created existence.

V

LOWER PURUSHA AND HIGHER PURUSHA—ATMA, PARAMATMA & JIVATMA

What is the underlying significance of the terms Purusha and Para.Purusha or the Self and Higher Self ?

As stated above the Sat or objective pervasion of Sachchidananda results in the emanation of the positive existence of the Brahmand. Then follows the descent of Chit or Spiritual Pervasion of Sachchidananda which ensouls the Akshar and Kshar existences. The term Purusha implies the sense of the Spirit indwelling in some

embodied existence, figuratively expressed as Pur or city. The Spiritual Chit aspect pervading and presiding over the Kshar Brahma existence is described as Kshar Purusha, and the Spirit pervading and presiding over Akshar Brahman existence is described as Akshar Purusha.

The Supreme Brahman is not a Purusha, because it being beyond manifestation has no positive embodied existence like Akshar and Kshar Brahman The Supreme Divine Spirit dwelling in that Status is the Spiritual Being far exceeding the Kshar Purusha, and superior to Akshar Purusha. Geeta, therefore, says in Chapter XV Verse 16 to 19 that there are two Purushas in this existence, one Kshar Purusha and the other Akshar Purusha. Kshar Purusha dwells in the created existence and the Akshar Purusha resides as the secret source of all (Kootastha) There is a third Spiritual Being also known as Param-atma, who exceeds Kshar, and excells Akshar Purusha, and is, therefore, known as Purushattama i e. superior to both the Purushas The Cosmic Kshar Purusha is the lower Purusha, because it involves itself in and works through the Cosmic nature , while the Cosmic Akshar Purusha is the Para or Higher Purusha.

ATMA The Supreme Divine manifests as the Cosmos consisting of Akshar and Kshar existences The Divine spirit pervading and presiding over this manifested Cosmic Existence is the Cosmic Atma, Cosmic Self or Cosmic Soul, which has two aspects—one of Sagun Divine and the other of Nirguna Divine

PARAMATMA The Supreme Divine Spirit exceeds and excells the manifested Cosmic Atma of Kshar and Akshar Existences and is, therefore, known as Paramatma [Paramat maeti udahrita—Ch. XV—17]

It is this Conscious Spiritual Aspect in the Cosmos that works out the entire Cosmic Activity with a predetermined object in view This important conception of the Vedanta about the Spiritual Pervasion in the Existence is a cogent

and apt reply to the atheistic conception of the Universe as a blind, incoherent and uncontrolled dynamic movement, devoid of any regulating, controlling or conscious willing factor behind.

JEEVATMA The Cosmic Atma (Self) manifests in the multiple creation in its fullness, but as a microcosm (vyashti). The Cosmic Self becomes an individual self (Jiva), when he descends through his spiritual nature in the Jan Lok and Mahar Lok The Jeeva existence is the expression of the inherent 'Many' aspect of the Cosmic Purusha He is said to be the portion of the Cosmic Divine not quantitatively but qualitatively. Jeeva is not an illusory or temporary aspect, but an eternal (Sanatan) aspect of the Divine. This spiritual individual being qualitatively the same as the Divine, the totality of the *Divine possibilities reside* in Him The Divine is the Cosmic microcosm (Samashti), and the Jeevatma is His exact microcosm, like a tree and its seed, or a landscape and its photograph All that exists in *the tree is involved in totality in its seed*, which possesses the *potentiality of growing into a blooming tree*

The Jeevatma is not subject to birth and death, but is eternally the spiritual being He has a dim sense of individuality and wants to *remain always in the* Divine embrace as a child soul or Kumar. For gaining experiences of the lower planes, His lower Ego self (Pratyak Atma) assumes personalities. On the mental plane he is the Manomaya purusha, on the vital, the pran maya purusha and on the physical, the Anna-maya purusha This Ego Self with a Casual body (Karan Sharir) remains subject to births and deaths impelled by the Karmic law of causation

The philosophical concepts described above have always been a subject of controversy among the diverse groups of philosophers, but one has hardly fathomed the Truth in any of the various conceptions of the Reality The saint Kabir in a beautiful couplet says that when you speak of the

Divine, there intervene the words, and where there are words, the truth is disfigured

"Jahan bol tahan akhar awa,

Jahan akhar tahan tatwa nasawa"

It is with great apologies to the learned readers that the wrong or right skeleton of these spiritual aspects have been attempted to be described above In the same spirit the terms Para prakriti and Apara-prakriti have been dealt with hereinafter in Chapter VII and the terms Ishwar and Parameshwar in Chapter IX of this commentary of Geeta.

VI

AUTHOR OF GEETA—PART I

It appears from a general reading of the Geeta that the Lord Shri Krishna narrated the entire discourse to Arjun while standing in the midst of the battlefield with millions of warriors arrayed on either side, just on the point of starting a life and death struggle When every moment was too precious to be lost at such a critical situation, can it be normally assumed that the Lord could have considerad it an opportune occasion to patiently drive home to Arjun such a terse technical Philosophy of Yoga, particularly in the unbalanced and confused condition of his brain ? If the answer is in the negative, then who was the author of the Geeta ?

Question is so leading that it cannot but evince an answer in the negative An attempt to support that a crucial moment in a battlefield, when war trumpets of both parties had filled the atmosphere with deafening sound, was a fitting occasion for such a philosophical discourse, may not be easily acceptable to the modern critical mind The discourse of the Geeta takes you to the innermost depth of

the highest spiritual regions and is of so lofty a character that none can boast of having grasped its true esoteric sense even by the persistent labour of whole life time. Only one who had the insight of the spiritual and terrestrial existence could speak out or write a discourse of this type. The author must have no doubt been a person possessing Divine Consciousness and Divine Wisdom. It may not be unrealistic to suppose that it was Lord Shri Krishna who gave salient arguments to Arjun in the battle-field to enable him to attend to his manly duty, to prevent the demoniac forces from dominating the righteous principles, and not to shirk his responsibility as a coward.

The theme may have been elaborated later, on the basis of philosophical thoughts of Sankhya, Upnishads, Brahma-Sutra or by independent realisation of the Truth, in order to reconcile and synthetise diverse philosophical thoughts current at the time. Whatever it may be, it is futile to give any importance to such a quibble, since we have before us a work so majestic and profound which none but the Divine Avtar or the God-knower could have given out to the world. It is also possible that some eminent sages with Divine realisation may have written out the Geeta to set at rest the then current diverse philosophical thoughts and religious disciplines by a beautiful synthesis, selecting for its background and setting almost crucial moment in the life of a typically moral and satwic personality like Arjun. Such a crisis often confronts even the most religious and satwic persons, but they are afraid of facing it, or if forced to do so they have to give a go-by to their higher moral principles and to resort to unscrupulous strategies. The crisis of Arjun was most poignant, since he had to face a terrible All-India war against his own kith and kin, highly venerable teachers and dearest relations.

It seems to have been a common practice of the ancient learned authors to write down lofty philosophical works not in the form of essays, but in the questionnaire form of a

dialogue between the teacher and the tought. The same practice has evidently been followed in the Geeta. There is thus no safe-guard in support of the theory that the questions appearing in the dialogue of the Geeta were exactly the same which Arjun had put to Lord Shri Krishna. Arjun is described as having lost balance of his brain, and to have developed Psycho-neurosis with mouth parched, body shivering, hairs standing erect, skin burning and head reeling. His weapon slipped from hands, and with shattered nerves he sits at the fag end of his chariot completely heart-broken and sobbing with tears (Ashrupurna) most unbecoming to the great traditions of his family As a result of nervous break-down his heroic nature collapses, his reason and intellect gets bewildered (Dharm Samudha Chaita), his sense functioning fails to work, being dried up by intense depression and sorrow (Yat Shokam uchchoshanam indryanam).

To further accentuate his mental disturbance and depression, there was the loudest din of the battlefield, of huge war-trumpets and conches blowing out deafening sounds, besides the intense hustle and bustle of millions of armed elephants, horses, chariots and infantry. One indeed finds himself cornered if he attempts to support the conception that such a battlefield could have been a suitable and opportune occasion for Lord Shri Krishna to deliver a highly intellectual and philosophical discourse on world existence and God existence to a person who was in no mental mood to grasp or follow the subtle intricacies of the arguments, much less to advance searching questions for a grasp of the inner sense.

VII

AUTHOR OF GEETA—PART II

Can it then be probable that the historical setting or background of the discourse of Geeta put figuratively set down between the Lord Krishna and Arjun, may have been the author's design to deeply and reverentially impress upon the readers, the sacredness of the discourse, as a scripture of Divine revelation by the Divine himself ?

Such a heretic argument may touch to the quick the orthodox sentiments of a devout, and may even upset him. But there can be no escape in the modern age from a pure intellectualist who has no sentimental hesitation in calling a spade a spade, by taking advantage of the least vulnerability of a dogmatic belief. He may treat such anger as a sure sign of his defeatism rather than a rational solution of a touchy question. Some of the most devout personages of the present day had to yield to such objections to a certain extent.

It is noteworthy that the discourse betweeen Lord Shri Krishna and Arjun has been narrated by Sanjaya to Dhritarashtra as hear-say, although he had not personally heard it. The discourse took place on the battlefield of Kurukshetra just before the great war was about to commence. Sanjaya is said to have narrated verbally the whole discourse to Dhritarashtra while sitting in his palace far away from the battle-field. Sanjaya alleges to have developed occult powers of *Television and Tele-audience and could*, therefore, listen and witness Lord Krishna personally speaking out his narration to Arjun. In Chapter XVIII-75 he says that through the grace of Vyas he heard this Supreme Secret, this Yoga directly from Krishna, the Divine Master of Yoga, while himself declaring it to Arjuna. *Unless the narration* of Sanjaya is assumed as being a verbatim tape-recorded

version of the talk, you may be justified in inferring that Sanjaya might have been the author of the Geeta

As stated above Sanjaya was a man of high spiritual advancement having acquired occult powers of Universal vision and audience The name Sanjaya denotes an idea of one who has thoroughly mastered his lower nature (San means thorough and Jaya means victor—a thorough victor), or one who has attained the consciousness of his higher self. A man of this stature becomes the connecting link between man and God. On account of his direct experience of the divinity he is in a position to become a medium for conveying spiritual vision of the existence and its relation with God to the mankind Geeta is, therefore, either a version of Krishna the Divine Avtar, or of a person who has attained divine realisation and divine consciousness, or obviously by Vyas.

VIII

SYMBOLOGY OF GEETA

What is the back ground of the great war between Kauravas and Pandavas and how this war has been made the setting of the Geeta discourse ?

The discourse of the Geeta is narrated by Sanjaya to Dhritarashtra who was in dire need of the war news at a moment when all his offsprings were running the risk of total disaster Dhritarashtra was congenitally blind or a personification of ignorance He had 100 sons of a similar nature known as Kauravas, the egoistic actors He being congenitally blind was not entitled to inherit the throne, and therefore, his younger brother Pandu was enthroned as the king of Hasthinapur kingdom Pandu unfortunately caught consumption and was advised to stay in the hill climate of the Himalayas on medical grounds. He, therefore,

left Hasthinapur leaving the throne to Dhritarashtra to work as a Regent until his return He however died in the hills, leaving five sons who were minors when they returned to Hasthinapur Kauravas were afraid lest these Pandavas may claim their father's kingdom on attaining majority, and so made some unsuccessful secret attempts to kill them On attaining majority Pandavas claimed a part of their father's kingdom, but Dhritarashtra usurped the national leadership as a king still more firmly. (Dhrit or firm and Rashtra or nation). His 100 sons supported him still more intently, and all negotiations for an amicable settlement having failed, the result was an all-India war

The Pandavas or yellow coloured were highly moral and *religious persons with auras of yellow colour The Kauravas* were the personification of Asuric forces. Therefore, Sanjaya predicted the result of the war even before the war had actually started, that for the party which had the warrior like Arjun and the charioteer or guide like Shri Krishna, is assured the glory, victory, prosperity and sound moral efficiency.

KURUKSHETRA This word means a field of action The World is in fact the field of action for the humanity of both the Daivic and Asuric nature and we experience a constant struggle between these forces sometimes developing into world wars The Great All India war was also fought on this very Kurukshetra between Pandavas and Kauravas, representatives of Daivic and Asuric Prakriti.

DHARMA KSHETRA Dharma means that which sustains or binds together It is a man's inner nature or swabhava which guides, binds or controls his actions in life Each man therefore acts according to the Law of his own nature. Daivic nature attract each other and form a group Similar is the case with men of Asuric natures Both groups at times come in clash resulting in wars The world is thus a field of action controlled and guided by one's swabhava or inherent

nature That is why the Daivic and Asuric forces are in perpetual war in a man's life. Shri Aurobindo gives a caution against stretching too far such symbolical explanation of the Geeta. "Arjun is the fighter in the chariot with the Divine Krishna as his charioteer. There is a method of explaining the Geeta, he says, in which not only this episode but the whole Maha-Bharat is turned into an allegory of the inner life which has nothing to do with outward human life and action, but only with the battles of the soul and the powers that strive within us for possession. This is a view which the general character and acual language of the epic does not justify, and if pressed would turn the straight forward philosophical language of the Geeta into a constant laborious and somewhat puerile mystification."

IX

THE CENTRAL THEME OF THE GEETA

What is the central theme of the Geeta ?

There is an old controversy about the central theme of the Geeta which still remains unsolved. According to some eminent philosophers, the main theme of the Geeta is either exclusive Gyan Yoga or exclusive Bhakti Yoga. The modern philospher Tilak designates Geeta as "Karma Yoga Shastra based on Gyan Yoga and predominating with Bhakti Yoga" (Gyan Moolak Bhakti pradhan, Karma Yoga Shastra). Each philosophical concept has attempted to find support for its truth from the Geeta, with the result that its different interpretations have made confusion worse confounded. Each concept has a truth of its own, when looked at from one particular angle of vision , but if one dives deep and acquires an intimate integral vision of the discourse, he finds that each concept has an appropriate place in the whole Shri Aurobindo has placed before us an

integral vision of the discourse of the Geeta, resulting in the synthesis of the various diverse philosphical concepts.

The idea expressed symbolically can be likened to a mango fruit which one is tempted to possess on account of its renowned delicious taste. But if tasted in unripe condition it gives the experience of sour taste. One who tastes it in partly ripe condition experiences it as neither sour nor sweet; but the other who tastes it in fully ripe condition, experiences it as most delicious and sweet like nectar. Each experience is undoubtedly a graded truth, but the integral truth lies in the experience of all these graded truths synthetically culminating in the nectar-like sweetness of fully ripe condition.

The Geeta carries us from the consciousness of degraded lower nature, through various graded evolutionary stages on the Divine path culminating in the fully ripe attainment of the Divine Bliss. Humanity has evolved out of the animal stage by the descent of Mind, and is rapidly advancing towards higher intellectual and philosophical ideals. But the animal instincts still lie ambushed in the sub-conscious mind, which emerge out unconsciously like a volcano inspite of oneself, particularly in mass movements of national, communal, regional and even religious types. They also emerge out unnoticed in our private life, inspite of our attempts to suppress them by the undigested religious and moral principles. A normal man thus always remains a prey to multiple worries, disappointments, sufferings, and discontentments, making his life devoid of joy and happiness, and a game not worth the candle. He, therefore, in moments of crisis begins to think of retiring from the world in a forest cave in search of peace. But so long as *his mind remains enslaved to lower mind and desires, talk of* peace is a cry in the wilderness.

Attachments to property, wealth and family often deter a man in his evolutionary march; and they are the main sources of dejection, disappointment and grief, with which

he remains perpetually united This was the mental condition of Arjun, when at the sight of his relations, friends and teachers arrayed against him for being butchered in the terrible war, he had to decide to allow the Might to preponderate over the Right, and to shirk his duty as a Kshattrya He thus found himself entrenched in Vishad Yoga or in union with grief The humanity in general at the present stage of evolution remains entrenched in Vishad Yoga like Arjun, and is in anxious search to find out a way for liberation from its clutches Geeta gives a solution of this riddle by gradually uplifting a man from this labyrinth, stage by stage in order to lead him on the Divine path. Man has already crossed the primary evolutionary stage of plant life and animal life, and now stands on the third stage of mental evolution, though still of lower/crude levels The Mind instead of being the ruler of man to lead him on the right path by intellectual discrimination between good and evil, remains enslaved to desires, and wanders about in search of sensual pleasures resulting in rack and ruin.

In order to curb this degenerating tendency of mind, the only way is to learn to live in the consciousness of higher levels of mind, in order that his mind may become the ruler and controller of his desire and physical body Geeta thus advises Arjun to live in the Buddhic Consciousness and discloses how one can become Sthit-Dhee, Sthit-Pragnya and Pragnya Pratishtith In order to attain this supramental status, it becomes essential to rise above the lower nature, and to resort to Karma Yoga to enable one to absolve himself from the bondage of actions The secret of success lies in the change of psychological outlook in world actions, and not in withdrawal from the world, or abandonment of action. For carrying on life in this world, action is a Biological necessity, and it cannot be abandoned. Geeta thus lays stress on the performance of action even by the highest realised person, so long as he is alive It lays down three Psychological points of view as guidance in the performance of action.

First principle is to perform action without any craving for its fruit, and to depending on the Divine Will for its result. The second principle is to get over the egoistic idea of personal action, but to consider his actions as a sacrifice in the Cosmic activity of the Divine (Yagnya Karma). The third principle is to develop the sense of the Divine nature as the real actor through the instrumentality of the body. Thus a stage comes when one truly becomes a Divine worker established in Divine action. These three essential principles of Karma Yoga result in the purification of lower nature even while one continues to perform his normal functions of life Karma Yoga thus culminates in the development of Divine Knowledge, but it has to be supplemented by stilling the mind and its one pointed concentration on the inner self By union with the inner self there is an over flooding of joy, and a severance from wordly worries and griefs. The consciousness of man thus develops supramental or Pragnya Consciousness, which realises his self as the selves of all, and all selves as part and parcel of the Divine Self The final stage of evolution arises when one realizes his higher self, is being attracted towards union with the Divine, by complete surrender and undeviating Bhakti. The Divine then takes entire charge of his devotee and accepts him in his embrace

The Divine Krishna is always enjoying His Leela or Divine Play in the created existence, and remains intent upon attracting man towards him by the symphony of his Divine Music played by him on the Divine Flute. The melody of his flute makes him the attractor (the Krishna, or Attractive Power) of the multitudes of ignorant persons living in the fastnesses of the forest of Dark Ignorance (Vrinda Ban) Those who care to listen to the Divine Flute are His Aradhaks (Radhas), whom he takes in his union and embrace

This Divine Flute has seven notes corresponding to the consciousnesses of seven Cosmic planes Man has so far

learnt to play on the discordant lower three notes of the physical desire, and lower mental consciousnesses, but the result is disharmony and clash. Geeta teaches you how to become an expert player on all the seven notes of the Divine Flute in blissful symphony and unison. The Geeta has thus been given most artistically the nomenclature of "Bhagwat Geeta or the Divine Song".

The central theme of the Geeta is to evolve human consciousness stage by stage from lower mind of desires to higher mental levels by Karma Yoga, to supramental level of Pragnya Consciousness by Gnyan Yoga, and ultimately to the Supreme Divine Consciousness by Bhakti Yoga. These three yogas find appropriate places in the Geeta Yoga, and no particular yoga can claim its sole monopoly in the Geeta. Geeta Yoga is an independent yoga by itself, comprehending and synthetising the three yogas Lord Krishna himself speaks about the superiority of Geeta Yogi over other Yogis in Ch VI-46 in the following words "Geeta Yogi is superior to Tapa Yogi, and in my opinion, superior even to Gnyan Yogi. He is superior to Karma Yogi also, and therefore, O Arjun ! become a Geeta Yogi.'

Practice of all the three yogas is indispensible for an integral Realisation of the Divine. Realisation by either of them exclusively may be possible, but it remains incomplete with rare future chance of completing the other two neglected aspects of the Divine. The Divine descends down through the individual self in the lower Avidya planes of mind, desire and matter only to directly experience the divine Leela, and His representative the individual self takes part in His ecstatic dance. The so callled Ignorance or Avidya is thereby transformed in Divine Knowledge (Vidya), and divine Bliss (Amritatva), as a result of leading a life of a true Karma Yogi. His actions being then in harmony with the Divine Play create no bondage, and he developes 'Naish-Karma' stage, where he experiences 'Inaction' in

'Action' and gets liberated from the chain of births and deaths.

The Avidya experience of the lower three planes has its own utility for the development of Vidya experience of divine knowledge. Experiences of the truth in Avidya and Vidya planes thus become *indispensible for attainment* of the integral Divine Realisation, since neither of them can be undivine existences. To resort exclusively to Gnyan yoga by discarding the Avidya existence as Maya or delusion, may by unaided personal effort lead with difficulty to the Realisation of the Nirgun Aspect of the Divine. But in the absence of the realisation of the Sagun aspect also, the Gnyan Yogis' realisation may ever remain incomplete. Isha-Upnishad thus lays stress on the realisation of both Avidya and Vidya existences. The Avidya experience enables one to cross death (Mrityum Tirtva), and the Vidya experience enables him to attain Amritatva or eternal Bliss.

Shri Aurobindo has laid stress on the realisation of the inner Truth of the Avidya and Vidya aspects of the divine *i.e.* both of Sagun and Nirgun Brahman for integral realisation, by a synthesis of Karma yoga, Gnyan yoga and Bhakti yoga in his interpretation of the Geeta. Tilak while admitting an important place of Gnyan Yoga and Bhakti Yoga in the Geeta has interpretted it as a Karma Yoga Shastras prominently, supplemented by the other two yogas. Other interpretors have similarly given a prominent place to their own preconceived *concept allotting a supplementary place to the* other two.

Geeta however allots appropriate places to these yogas as progressive rungs of the divine ladder, in most emphatic terms :

(*i*) *KARMA YOGA* has its importance in bringing about freedom from the bondage of actions and rebirths. Its ultimate goal is the attainment of "Naish-Karma Siddhi" (Ch. XVIII—49) or a psychological attitude in actions which

creates no bondage. Karma Yoga purifies the lower nature of mind and senses and culminates in Gnyan or divine Wisdom [Geeta Ch. IV-33]

(*ii*) *GNYAN* develops universal consciousness, and the vision of one's self as the selves of all, and all selves as the one indivisible divine self. (Ch. IV-35 & CH. VI-29, 30, 31) There is then the emergence of intense love and supreme Bhakti of the divine. Geeta says that the highest gnyani is one who engrosses himself in the Divine by devotion of his Antar-Atma to him with intense faith and bhakti [Ch. VI-47]

(*iii*) *BHAKTI AND GNYAN YOGA* becomes a universal being (Brahma Bhuta) full of divine Bliss and equal-visioned to all creatures and attains supreme bhakti of the Divine (Ch. XVIII-53, 54). Having attained supreme bhakti he acquires integral experience of the Divine and finally enters in union with him [Ch. XVIII 55].

These progressive stages of Karma Yoga, Gnyan Yoga and Bhakti Yoga are so very emphatically asserted in the Geeta, that one cannot but arrive at an irresistible conclusion, that the central theme of the discourse was no other than the Integral Yoga as Shri Aurobindo puts it , and not either exclusive Karma Yoga or exclusive Gnyan Yoga or exclusive Bhakti Yoga.

SHRIMAD BHAGWAT GEETA

CHAPTER I

VISHAD YOGA

I-A-QUERRY OF DHRITA-RASHTRA-(1—1 to 2)

Dhrita-Rashtra being naturally anxious for the fate of his sons in the battlefield questions Sanjaya to disclose to him by means of his occult vision, the details about the activities of each belligerent block in the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

I-1. What was done by the ego-dominated Kauravas (Mamkah) and the Pandavas gathered together eager for battle at the Kurukshetra (Field of action), which is also the Dharma Kshetra [A field for free display of the law of one's nature] ?

I-2 Sanjaya replied that the prince Duryodhan having seen the army of the Pandavas arrayed in the battlefield approached his teacher Dronacharya and spoke to him these words.

I-A (1) GENERALS OF PANDAVAS' ARMY (1—3 to 6)

I-3 Behold this mighty host of the sons of Pandu commanded by the sons of Drupad, thy intelligent disciple.

I-4 Here in this mighty army are heroes and great archers who are as strong in battle as Bhim and Arjun. For instance Yuyudhan, Virat, Drupad—the expert charioteer.

I-5 Dhrisht-Ketu, Chekitan, the valiant prince of Kashi, Prujit, Kuntibhoj and Shaiva, the foremost among men.

I-6 Yudha-Manyu. the strong, Uttamauja, the courageous, Abhi-Manyu, the son of Subhadra and the sons of Dropdi, all of them of enormous prowess.

I-A (2) GENERALS OF KAURAVAS' ARMY (1—7 to 11)

I-7 On our side also know those who are the most distinguished leaders of my army. I name them to you to draw your special attention

I-8 Thyself (Dronacharya), Bhishma, Karna, Krup the victorious in battle, Ashwathama, Vikarna, and Bhuri-Shrava, son of Somdatt.

I-9 There are many other heroes well armed with war weapons for attack, and well skilled in warfare. They have all dedicated their lives for my sake.

I-10 Unlimited is this army of ours marshalled by Bhishma , while the army of Pandavas is limited and marshalled by Bhim

I 11 Therefore, all of you my generals standing in your respective divisions in the different fronts of the battle, have your special attention on the safety of Bhishma

I-A (3) CHALLENGE FOR WAR (1—12 to 19)

What did these great warriors do in the battlefield by way of challenge for war ?

I-12 In order to cheer up Duryodhan, the mighty grand Sire Bhishma, the eldest of the Kurus, blew his conch resounding the battlefield with a lion's roar

I 13 Then Conches, War-drum , tabors, cow-horns suddenly blared forth creating tremendous sound.

I-14 Then seated in their war chariot looked to white horses, Madhav, the Lord Shri Krishna, and Arjun, the son of Pandu blew their divine Conches.

I-15 Hrishikesh (Krishna) blew his Panch-Janya, Arjun blew his Dev-Datt conch, Vrikodar of terrible deeds (Bhim) blew his mighty conch Paundra

I-16 The king Yudhishtir, son of Kunti blew his Ananta-Vijaya conch; Nakul blew Sughosh, and Sahadev blew his Mani-Pushpak conch.

I-17 Kashya, of huge bow, Shikhandi, the great charioteer, Dhrishta-Dyumna, Virat and Satyaki, the invincible.

I-18 *Drupad and the sons of Draupadi, Abhimanyu, the son of Subhadra, and other kings of the earth began to blow their separate conches.*

I-19 The tumultuous uproar resounding on the earth and the sky rent the hearts of the sons of Dhrita-Rashtra.

Ch. 1-B (1) ARJUN SEES HIS OPPONENTS (1—20 to 25)

Both parties must have been aware about the terrible consequences of such a great All-India-war, irrespective of one's victory or defeat. Kauravas being Asuric by nature could not be prevailed upon to abstain from war; but Lord Krishna and Arjun were intellectually the wisest men of the time, highly ethical and religious. Had these great personalities also their willing consent to a step leading to such a national catastrophe ?

Lord Krishna in his supervision knew that *evil is bound to dominate the good unless suppressed in time even by violence. He looked above the local attachments of family, caste, society and religious creeds.* But Arjun had all these old associations haunting over his mind, even while he was outwardly preparing for war. It is not that these associations suddenly flashed before his mind, when he physically witnessed his opponents in the battlefield. They were forcibly lurking within him, and in order to dispel their weakening influences, he like a Kshatri Hero tried to bear these cowardly forces in their own den. He thus deliberately made his chariot to stand in the very face of those whom he had to kill in the battle. But the worldly attachment of old associations with his erst-while near and dear relations and

friends proved too strong for him to resist in order to indulge in this deadly warfare for their devastation Sanjaya then proceeds to say as follows —

I 20 Thus beholding the sons of Dhrita Rashtra arrayed in the battlefield intent upon discharging their war weapons, Arjun the son of Pandu seated on a chariot flying the flag bearing the emblem of Hanuman took up his bow (by way of defiance to his enemies)

I 21 He then addressed Lord Krishna, the Lord of the earth to 'station thy chariot in the midst of the two armies,

I 22 so that I may behold those arrayed in the battlefield desiring and longing for war, and whom I will have to meet in the holiday of the battle in the ensuing war

I 23 I will like to see all those gathered together ready to fight and wishing for success of the evil minded sons of Dhrita-Rashtra"

I 24 Lord Krishna on having been thus addressed by Arjun stationed his fine chariot in the midst of the two armies,

I 25 directly facing Bhishma, Dron and all other rulers of the world and said, "O Partha, behold these Kurus gathered together for a deadly war"

CH I B (2)—ARJUN'S DEPRESSION (I—26 to 35)

What was the reaction of Arjun on witnessing this dreadful sight of the battlefield ?

I 26 Then Arjun saw standing before him those related to him as uncles, grand fathers, teachers mother's brothers, cousins, sons, grand sons, comrades,

I 27 fathers in law and benefactors in both armies, seeing all these kinsmen thus standing arrayed for war, Arjun, the son of Kunti

I 28 was deeply moved to pity and in utter sadness and dejection addressed Shri Krishna saying "at the sight of

these my kinsmen arrayed in the battlefield eager for fight,

I-29. my limbs get benumbed, my mouth gets parched, my body quivers, and my hair stand erect,

I-30. Gandiv slips from my hand, and my skin burns all over. I am not even able to stand and my brain is reeling in great confusion.

I-31. I see ominous omens all over, O Keshav ! nor do I consider it a meritorious deed to slay my own kinsmen in the war.

I-32. I do not desire victory, O Krishna ! nor am I desirous of a kingdom or other pleasures. What is the value of a kingdom or other enjoyments, or even of life to me,

I-33 If those for whom we desire such kingdom, enjoyment and pleasures, are standing here in the battlefield ready to sacrifice their very lives and riches ?

I-34. Teachers, fathers, sons, as well as grand-fathers, mother's brothers, fathers-in-law, grand-son, brothers-in-law and other relations,

I-35. these I do not wish to kill though I may myself be slain, even for the sake of the kingdom of the three worlds, what to say of this earth."

I-C—ARJUN'S ARGUMENTS TO JUSTIFY HIS STAND (1—36 to 47)

What were the arguments advanced by Arjun to desist from war at this eleventh hour ?

I-36. (i) *Sin*—What pleasure will it be to us to kill the sons of Dhrita-Rashtra ? We will have to resort to the sinful act of man-slaughter, even though they are cruel oppressors.

I-37. (ii) *Destruction of family*—It does not befit us to kill our kinsmen, the sons of Dhrita-Rashtra. How can we derive pleasure by slaying our own people ?

I-38. Although they with a consciousness clouded by greed, see no guilt in the destruction of family, or a sin in hostility to friends,

I-39. why should not we, who see evil in the destruction of the family, think of withdrawing from such a sinful act.

I-40. (*iii*) *Degeneration of family tradition*—By the destruction of the family, the old family traditions are destroyed and by the collapse of traditions, lawless, sinful life overcomes the entire family.

I-41. (*iv*) *Corruption of fair sex and mixture of blood*—Owing to the predominance of lawlessness, the ladies of the family get corrupt, and women thus corrupted generate a class of hybrid descent.

I-42. (*v*) *Life in hell*—This hybrid mixture drags down to hell the slayers of the family and even the family ancesters, because the rites for appeasing the dead by offering of rice balls and libations, disappear, there being none to perform them.

I 43. (*vi*) *Decay of the race*—By these misdeeds of the annihilators of the family, the race purity, established laws and duties and family traditions are destroyed.

I-44. The abode of the men whose family customs and morals are destroyed, is everlastingly in hell, as we have heard.

I-45. Alas ! we are preparing for commission of a great sin by endeavouring to kill our own people to satisfy the greed of the pleasure of kingship.

I-46. I would deem it more for my welfare if the sons of Dhrita-Rashtra armed with war weapons, slay me unresisting and unarmed in the battle.

I-47. Sanjaya says : "Having thus spoken on the battle-field, Arjun overborne by mental grief, sat down on the back seat of his chariot, casting away his bow and arrows."

CHAPTER II

Buddhi Yoga

II-A—ARGUMENTS OF ARJUN-CONTINUED-(II-1 to 9)

II-1 *Sanjaya says :* On hearing these arguments of Arjun, who stood self-condemned, overpowered by pity, eyes brimming with tears, and heart full of despondency, Lord Krishna addressed thus—

II-2. Whence hath this dejection befallen thee in this perilous hour, O Arjun ! It is ignoble for an Arya and is heaven-closing and inglorious.

II-3. *O Partha !* Do not yield to such impotence, as it does not befit a hero like you. Shake off this paltry weakness of heart and stand up.

What was Arjun's response to this advice ?

Instead of obeying this command of Lord Krishna, Arjun repeated his arguments with greater emphasis in support of his stand by speaking thus :—

II-4. *O Madhusudan !* How shall I stand with arrows to fight in battle against Bhishma and Drona for whom I have so much reverence ?

II-5. It is better to live in this world on alms than to slay these high-souled Gurus. Slaying these Gurus for victory, I would be enjoying only the blood-stained pleasures of this world.

II-6. We do not know what is the best solution of this problem ; whether we shall conquer or will be vanquished. The sons of Dhrita-Rashtra by killing whom, we would not desire to live, are standing before us for war.

II-7. My nature being overpowered by cowardly-complex and my reason too bewildered to trace out a proper law of

action, I request you to give me a well-considered advice leading to my highest well-being. Surrendering myself to you as a disciple, I beseech your decisive guidance.

II-8. I cannot visualise any solution which can dispell my sense-drying grief, even if I were to attain a rich, enviable kingdom on earth, or even sovereignty over the gods.

II-9. Sanjaya says that Arjun having thus addressed Lord Krishna became silent, finally declaring that he shall not fight.

II-B—SOLUTION OF THE RIDDLE-(II—10 to 38)

How did Lord Krishna proceed to solve the difficulty of Arjun and to bring about a change in his decisive attitude ?

"Arjun is the man of action and not of Knowledge, the fighter, never the seer or thinker. He typifies the human soul of action brought face to face (through that action in its highest and most violent crisis), with the problem of human life, and its apparent incompatibility with the spiritual state, or even with a purely ethical ideal of perfection. The nature of the crisis is an all-embracing inner bankruptcy, which he expresses when he says, that his whole conscious being, not the thought alone, but vital, desire and all, are utterly bewildered and can find nowhere the Dharma, no-where any valid law of action······For this alone he takes refuge as a disciple with Krishna : Give me he practically asks, a true law, a clear rule of action, a path by which I can again confidently walk" (Shri Aurobindo).

Arjun is a typical representative of the highest social, ethical, and religious ideals of the age. He is prepared to allow the tyranical, un-ethical and irreligious forces to overpower the just, equitable moral principles ; but is not

prepared to deviate from his high principles of life. The arguments advanced by him against war are quite strong, sound and rational from social and moral stand-point. Any man possessing a moral sense, if faced with such a crisis, might advance them, may be, as excuses to postpone the evil day. An attempt of such avoidance may be verging on weakness, fear or piety, but the evil, if not suppressed in time, does not terminate by such attitude bordering on cowardice. Final settlement and peace needs willing approval of both parties. If one party tries to avoid the evil day prompted by higher ethical motives, while the adverse party treats that attitude as one of fear or weakness, and persists in its devilish triumph, what would be your unbiased opinion in the matter ? One might feel inclined to accord his full support to the advice of Lord Krishna, and not to charge him for provocation to war. All attempts for amicable settlement having failed, the only course open was to face the situation with courage, and not to yield to the oppressors' dominating attitude without a challenge.

II-C—ETERNITY OF LIFE—(II—10 to 25)

How does Lord Krishna meet the most important objection of Arjun about Man-slaughter in war and its resultant sin ?

The greatest objection of Arjun against war centered round the idea of sin resulting from slaughter of man of his own clan and family, not against Durjodhana as such. From the mental and social standpoint an act of causing death, specially of men, is the greatest of sins, because it is supposed to interrupt the continuity of life. Sin and virtue are psychological concepts applicable to man who is endowed with mind. Intention is the gist of sin. Causing of death in roughness by accident or in war or in self-defence, or by an

insane, or by a child may amount to no sin. According to Geeta Ch. XVIII—17, one who acts freed from ego sense, and without his mind being implicated in the act, cannot be said to be a slayer, nor is he bound by sin, even if his act results in man-slaughter. In the plant and animal world there being no existence of discriminative mind, there is no question of intention or sin in its normal law of "life devouring life." Survival of the fittest is the main moral principle of that kingdom. But it cannot be applied to a human being, who is endowed with the faculty of mental discrimination, and he cannot so recklessly deal with life.

Lord Krishna meets Arjun's objection from the broader outlook of the existence of life from the spiritual point of view. He sees life as an eternal Consciousness and Activity, never interrupted by the so-called death or change of form. The change of forms is, from that vision, a normal process of eternal continuity of the Cosmic Life Principle. Life is an energy rushing out from the Chit aspect of Sachchidanand, the Cosmic Self. It is the dynamic expression of the Cosmic Atma, working out creation, preservation and destruction in the multiple existence. Building, preserving, sustaining and re-building forms is the normal process of evolving life. Each change or death implies an activity of life, and consequently a progressive chain of life's continuity. Where there is activity, there is life, and where there is life, there is activity. The departure of life called death, is nothing but an activity of life in other worlds. Thus Death is Life, and Life is Death, both constituting a single process of continuity of the eternal Life.

Life is the dynamic energy of the Self or Soul, and since the Soul is eternal, it's life energy is also eternal. When we talk of life, we in fact, talk of Soul, which is above the cycle of birth and death. Shri Aurobindo says in Life Divine Ch. XIX, that Death has no reality except as a process of Life. Disintegration of substance and renewal of substance,

maintenance of form and change of form are the constant process of life. Death is merely a rapid disintegration subservient to Life's necessity of change and variation. Even in the death of the body there is no cessation of life .....If there is in the bodily form a mental or psychic energy that also is not destroyed, but only breaks out from one form to assume other by some process of metempsychosis or new ensouling of the body. All renews itself, nothing perishes... All existence here is a Universal Life that takes form of matter.

It must be remembered that Lord Krishna expounds here only what life really is, as enunciated by the current Sankhy philosophy which Arjun himself believed, only to meet his argument about the interruption of life by death. He in fact does not give any opinion of his own by way of advocating or inciting man-slaughter. We find his opinion on the point in Verse 38 where he advises Arjun to face the battle treating pleasure or pain, gain or loss, victory or defeat as equal, and says that with such equanimity as a guiding principle in life's struggle he would commit no sin.

Having heard the high sounding arguments and having noticed the decisive attitude of Arjun, though standing fully prepared for war in the midst of the two armies, Lord Krishna, at the very beginning of war operations, could not help discardingly smile at the most unbecoming and cowardly behaviour of Arjun at the eleventh hour. He thus addressed Arjun as follows :—

II-10 Lord Krishna then smilingly addressed the despondent Arjun standing in between the two armies.

II-11. Thou grievest for those that should not be grieved for, yet speakest words of wisdom. The enlightened do not mourn either for the living or for the dead.

Life being eternal, the soul cannot be deemed as dead on death of body. It always was in the past, exist in the present, and shall persist even in future. The wise, therefore, never mourn for the dead or for the living.

II-12 It is not true that at any time I did not exist, nor you, nor these kings, the leaders of men ; nor is it true that any of us shall ever cease to be here-after

II-13. As the soul passes physically through childhood, youth, and old age, so it passes on in transition to another body. The self-composed man does not get bewildered or disturbed by death

For him death affords no cause for mourning as it does so poignantly to ordinary human beings, since these four transitional s ages are inevitable natural conditions of life A wise man attaches no importance to good or bad experiences of these transitional stages, arising out of contacts with nature, knowing them as transitory

II-14. The contact of senses with sense objects giving rise to dual experiences of heat or cold, pleasure or pain, are transitory and temporary and must be endured

II-15. He who is self-composed, equally balanced in pleasure and pain, whom sense objects do not disturb, is aptly fitted for experiencing Life's eternity and bliss

Each living creature has a limited view of life because he looks at things from the mental level Mind cannot see the whole, and attempts to know the whole It unifies, synthetises and links together the parts, but no collocation of parts can possibly make a whole. Separativeness is the characteristic of the mind, while unity is the characteristic of spiritual consciounsess Thus when we look at life from mental stand-point, we visualise it as limited within one birth-death period But if one can look at life from spiritual consciousness, he will visualise it not in parts as several Life-death periods, but as an eternal existence incapable of termination by the so-called death. Lord Krishna thus speaks about Atma and its dynamic energy (life) from the spiritual point of view as follows :

II-16. Non-existent cannot come in existence, while an existent can never become non-existent. The mystery of the two has been discovered by the seers of the principle of existence.

II-17. Know that to be eternal and indestructible by which the entire universe is pervaded. Nothing is capable of destroying that which is imperishable.

II-18. *Finite and destructible are these bodies of the* indwelling soul, which is eternal, indestructible and *immeasurable. Therefore, O Bharat! Fight and resist.*

II-19. He who regards this indwelling soul as a slayer, or one who regards it as slain, both are ignorant of the Truth. This indwelling soul neither slays nor is slain.

II-20. This indwelling soul is never born nor does it die; nor is it a being that comes into existence, and once passing away from this body will never come into being again. It is unborn, ancient, sempiternal, it is not slain with the slaying of the body.

II-21. One who realizes this soul as imperishable, eternal, unborn and undiminishing, how can he conceive that it is he who slays or is caused to be slain.

II-22. As a man casting off worn-out garments puts on new ones, so the dweller in the body casting off worn-out body puts on a new one

Is it possible to have an objective conception of this indwelling soul?

The soul is not matter and cannot be subjected to the methods of scientific test The mystery of an atom's involved spirit will always remain incomprehensible to the objective scientific processes and tests.

II-23. Weapons cleave not the soul, nor can the fire burn it, nor does water drench it, nor can wind dry it.

II-24. The soul is uncleavable, incombustible, it can neither be drenched nor dried. It is eternal, all-pervading,

dynamic as well as stable, immobile and ancient in its static aspect.

II-25. It is described as unmanifest, unthinkable, immutable (in its static *nirguna* state). Therefore, knowing it as such, it does not befit you to grieve.

II-26. Even if you think the self as being constantly subject to birth and death, still it does not become you to grieve for the dead.

II-27. Because certain is death for the born, and certain is birth for the dead. Therefore that which is inevitable ought not to be the cause of your grief.

II-28. All created beings are un-manifest in the beginning, become manifest in the middle, and again become unmanifest on dissolution. Then what is there to be grieved for ?

Experience of the self is absolutely different from all experiences we know of. Therefore, one gets absorbed in great astonishment if he happens to visualize it, or to speak about it to others, or to hear about it from others, and still he knows it not.

Thus Lord Krishna says :—

II-29. Some visualize the self in great astonishment, some speak about it in astonishing terms, and some hear about it from the learned in great wonder ; but inspite of lifelong sermoning they are unable to know its reality.

II-30. The dweller in the body of every one is eternal and indestructible, O Bharat ! Therefore, it is most unbefitting for you to grieve for any creature.

O Arjuna ! to feel un-nerved, for there is nothing more welcome to a Kshatriya than a war for a righteous cause.

II-32. Happy are the Kshatriyas who come face to face with such an un-sought-for war as a wide open door to heaven.

II-33. If you do not carry on this righteous warfare, you will cast to the winds your own duty and honour, and thereby incur sin.

II-34 Men will perpetually recount your dishonour, and to one who is always held in high esteem, dishonour is worst than death.

II-35. The great generals of mighty chariots standing in opposition, will consider you as having run away from the battlefield due to fear. You will fall in estimation of those who always held you in high esteem.

II-36. Many unseemly words will be spoken by your enemies, slandering your strength. Will there be anything more painful than that ?

II-37. If slain you will attain heaven, and if victorious you will enjoy the kingdom of earth. Therefore, O son of Kunti ! stand up fully determined to fight.

II-38. Treating pleasure or pain, gain or loss, victory or defeat as equal, gird up your loin for battle, and you will then incur no sin.

BUDDHI-YOGA OR PRAGYA CONSCIOUSNESS

II-E (1) SPECIAL FEATURES OF BUDDHI YOGA

You insist on boldly taking up the challenge for war in life's battle, but qualify it by adding an unpracticable clause of equanimity of mind as the guiding principle. Please make this point more intelligible and point out the practical possibility of observing such equanimity in world action.

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II-30. The dweller in the body of every one is eternal and indestructible, O Bharat ! Therefore, it is most unbefitting for you to grieve for any creature.

II-D—WAR—A SOCIAL NECESSITY FROM WORLDLY STANDPOINT ? (II-31 to 38)

How do you meet Arjuna's strong opposition against war on social and moral grounds ?

II-31. Lord Krishna says, that from the standpoint of the law of action of the Kshatriya, it does not become you

O Arjuna ! to feel un-nerved, for there is nothing more welcome to a Kshatriya than a war for a righteous cause.

II-32. Happy are the Kshatriyas who come face to face with such an un-sought-for war as a wide open door to heaven.

II-33. If you do not carry on this righteous warfare, you will cast to the winds your own duty and honour, and thereby incur sin.

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II-35. The great generals of mighty chariots standing in opposition, will consider you as having run away from the battlefield due to fear. You will fall in estimation of those who always held you in high esteem.

II-36. Many unseemly words will be spoken by your enemies, slandering your strength. Will there be anything more painful than that ?

II-37. If slain you will attain heaven, and if victorious you will enjoy the kingdom of earth. Therefore, O son of Kunti ! stand up fully determined to fight.

II-38. Treating pleasure or pain, gain or loss, victory or defeat as equal, gird up your loin for battle, and you will then incur no sin.

BUDDHI-YOGA OR PRAGYA CONSCIOUSNESS

II-E (1) SPECIAL FEATURES OF BUDDHI YOGA

You insist on boldly taking up the challenge for war in life's battle, but qualify it by adding an unpracticable clause of equanimity of mind as the guiding principle. Please make this point more intelligible and point out the practical possibility of observing such equanimity in world action.

Equanimity is the key-note of success in the battle of life. Fight we must to resist an evil, but with the guiding principle of detachment from pleasure or pain, victory or defeat, and gain or loss. This principle of equanimity might sound theoretically pleasing and admirable, but when we are confronted with a concrete crisis in practical life, this high ideology proves ineffective in execution. It can be made effective in actual practice only when it becomes part and parcel of our nature, in supersession of the present mental and desire nature. There is already involved in man a principle of higher consciousness called PRAGYA or super-mind, above the present mental and desire consciousness. Once this higher consciousness is evolved, equanimity becomes a normal feature of man's conduct in life. Man has so far evolved physical desire and mental consciousness. In majority of man-kind only the lower sense-mind, is evolved, but the higher levels of mind are still super-conscient. Beyond the normal consciousness of sense-mind there exist superior consciousnesses of higher-mind, Intuitive-mind, Inspired-mind, Revelatory-mind and Over-mind. Beyond this vast region of mental consciousness, there is a still more superior consciousness of our Vigyan-mayakosh, styled as Pragya Consciousness, which is not separative like mind, but is unitary and spiritual. Equanimity is its normal feature in dealing with the world actions. It is a reflex of the unitary spiritual principle in the diversity of Triloki. By practice it becomes a normal functioning of the mind when we unite it with the Pragya Buddhi consciousness. This union of the two is called Buddhi Yoga, and the one who attains it is described as Pragya Pratisthit or established in Pragya Buddhi.

It must however be noted that the term Buddhi as ordinarily understood is the intellectual discriminating faculty of the mind, which is a diffused reflection of the Higher Pragya Buddhi, the Cosmic Divine Wisdom or MAHAT Buddhi. The speciality of the Geeta Yoga lies in the direct stress laid from place to place on the evolution

of this Buddhic consciousness, as a stepping stone to the highest divine realisation. The various practices to achieve it have been described in verses 40 to 72 of this Chapter. It is however attainable only by descent of the divine grace, as described in Chapter X Verse 9 & 10. Finally in Chapter XVIII Verse 57 *a special emphasis is given to the Buddhi* Yoga as a royal-graded path leading towards divine realisation.

The Adwaitins and also some atheistic philosophers take a short cut from mind level directly to the highest spiritual level, ignoring the awakening of the intermediary Pragya consciousness, by paralysing mind's normal function of thought *forming, intellectualising, memorising and discriminating* etc. The significance of Geeta Yoga lies in its attempt of graded evolution of consciousness by the normal stages provided by nature. It purifies and consecrates the desire and mental consciousnesses by practice of Karma Yoga, *and then leads to the evolution of the next grade of* Pragya consciousness leading to Gyan Yoga. It then evolves the spiritual consciousness by Bhakti Yoga. These three Yogas that is Karma yoga, Gyan yoga and Bhakti yoga are the gradual normal stages of the divine path, and not independent paths by themselves. We thus find a synthesis and not a discordance in the treatment of these yogas in the Geeta.

As a result of evolution of this Pragya Buddhic consciousness, equanimity becomes a practical normal functions of mind, senses and body. Its *utility lies in the fact* that it not only opens a royal path to divine realisation, but it also spiritualises the mind, desires and even the bodies which are considered superfluous, and delusive appearances by the *maya-vadins.* The path of Buddhi yoga *is called the royal* secret of the royal knowledge (Raj vidya ; Raj guhyam), because it is not an unexplored path of blind adventure.

After meeting Arjun's arguments based on the then current philosophical, social and ethical concepts of

Sankhya by expounding their true significance, Lord Shri Krishna proceeds to advance his own solution of the riddle of the world problems, which the entire humanity has to face in life's struggle. The solution lies in the attainment of mind's union with the next evolutionary principle of *Pragya buddhi*, which is at present lying dormant.

Lord Shri Krishna proceeds to address Arjun thus :—

II-39 The aforesaid knowledge has been set forth to you on the lines of the Sankhya. Now listen to the knowledge in the light of Buddhi yoga. By attaining union with this Buddhi (Pragya) you shall cross over the bondage of action.

What are the special features of Buddhi Yoga, and where lies its superiority over other methods ?

II-40 In this yoga there is no loss of effort, nor is there any retrogression. Even a little progress in this buddhic law of action, enables one to cross over the most terrible dangers.

Shri Aurobindo says that when you have once set out on this path, you will find that no effort is lost and even a small beginning will be a gain. You will find there no obstacles that can baulk you of your advance.

II-41 In this yoga, there is only one common determining principle of behaviour (vyavasayatimika buddhi) with all kinds of world problems. Many-branched and endless are the guiding principles of the indiscriminate, irresolute persons.

"Vyavasayatimika buddhi" means one common determining intellectual principle for dealing with all kinds of world problems. The guiding principle of all actions remains one and the same, because the Buddhi Yogi unites himself with the unitary cosmic Buddhic principle. Divine will in world action dominates as the sole motto of Divine fulfilment on the earth. Those

who are dominated by ego, mind and senses have always to think hundred *times before taking* a *decision, because* they have their own selfish interests to serve, rather than the divine interest of cosmic unitary action, which the Buddhi Yogi makes it a point to serve.

II-E (2) Guiding Intelligence for Actions Of Desire Dominated Persons

II-42 & 43 The desire-driven persons (Kamatmanah), followers of the Karma Kanda of Vedas (Vedvadartah), seekers of *paradise* (Swarga *para*), *proclaiming that* Swarga as the highest of all other attainments (Nanyat-astiti vadinah), loudly announce in attractive flowery words (Pushpitam vacham), the merits of a creed involving long technical process of numerous rituals (Kriya vishesh bahulam), *aimed at the achievement of worldly* pleasures and mastery, but resulting in the bondage of fruits of action for the next birth (Janma Karma Phal-Pradam).

II-44 The discriminate Reason of Buddhi yoga is never established in those, who are enamoured by such words *and who cling to pleasures and lordship.*

II-45 This vedic method of *yagyas* is predominantly *trigunatmic in character,* (*aiming at* the worldly happiness, desire and comfort). O Arjun! rise above the gunas, and the pairs of opposites, establish yourself in eternal Divine Truth, free from all hankerings of acquisition or preservation (Niryoga-kshema), *and realise* your true self.

II-46 The *utility of all* the Vedas *to a* Brahma Knower is no better than the utility of a well to a person who is on the brink of a brimming and overflowing water place.

How is it that the Geeta has so vehemently subjected the vedas to such trenchant and smarting criticism ?

Geeta is a revelation of the Cosmic Truth and its working in the world existence, and not a religious dogma of any particular religion or creed. So are the Vedas which deal not only with the spiritual wisdom, but also with the concrete working of the divine law in the world existence. This Cosmic Law of dynamic nature, Yajna of Sacrifice is the divine law brought into being along with the manifestation of the multiple existence out of the One (Geeta Ch. III Verse 10). It is this law which is known as the law of Divine sacrifice or Cosmic Yagna in which every man has to participate. Details on this subject will be dealt with in Ch. III and IV. This esoteric sense of the term 'Yajna' as mentioned in the Vedas or Geeta has to be distinguished from the exoteric sense of Karma Kanda which is usually attached to that term (Yajna) consisting of complicated rituals and ceremonies.

Both Geeta and Vedas give greatest esoteric importance to this law of Yajna in a wide Cosmic sense. The exoteric sense of Karma Kanda of ritualistic predominance, seems to have been later on developed to satisfy man's urge for personal ambitions, desires, and the dreams of a happy life more or less sensual in *swarga* after death. It is this desire aspect of *yagna* that has been unhesitatingly and emphatically criticised in the Geeta, and not the esoteric Cosmic Truth revealed in the Vedas. The catholicity of the Geeta, though belonging to the Hindu idealism is brought in the forefront by the very fact of its bold criticism of the elaborate Karma Kanda view-point of the vedas, in such scathing phraseology. Geeta is not opposed to *yagna* as a personal sacrifice to the divine. It, on the other hand, enjoins on every body to perform it as an imperative duty of daily life. It is opposed only to the performance of it to serve any selfish interest.

II-E (3) DETERMINING PRINCIPLE OF BUDDHI YOGA AND ITS SUPERIORITY OVER ALL OTHERS

What is the one common determining principle of Buddhi yoga for dealing with the world problems ?

II-47. The Lord says that you are entitled only to the performance of action, but you have no claim over its fruit. *So let not the fruits of action be your motive*, but then let not in-action be your choice.

II-48. You should act established in Buddhi yoga view-point, *renouncing attachment, and becoming equal-visioned in* success or failure. It is this equanimity of vision that is characterised as the determining principle of *Buddhi yoga.*

II-49. Far *inferior* is the fruit-propelled action than the action performed with the Buddhi yoga standpoint. One who has fruits as the sole motive of action is narrow-minded. You should, therefore, take resort to Budddi yoga.

The entire activity of animate or inanimate creation in the world is part and parcel of the Cosmic energy working with a Cosmic end in view. Instead of working as a link of the Cosmic scheme, we appropriate actions to ourselves as individual efforts, to bring about some selfish ends. Our viewpoint of action is thus obviously narrow-minded as contrasted with the Cosmic viewpoint.

What is the superiority of an action done with the Buddhic standpoint, over an action done with the ordinary mental standpoint ?

II-50. He who is united with the *buddhi yoga* stand-point of action as a link of the divine scheme gets over the ordinary virtuous or sinful bondages, to which an ordinary man is *subjected. Therefore, you should unite yourself* with Buddhi yoga, because true efficiency of action lies in its performance with Buddhic *outlook. Yoga is skill* in action.

II-51. Great spiritual thinkers uniting themselves with Buddhi yoga relinquish all fruits resulting from actions, and thus getting liberated from the bondage of birth proceed towards the indescribable status of Bliss.

II-52. When your intellect crosses over muddy tangle of worldly attachments, then you reach a stage where you become dis-interested in the scriptures heard or which are yet fit to be heard

When one attains Buddhic consciousness he becomes aware of the *entire knowledge of the spiritual regions as* well as of the world. Knowledge of scriptures does not then remain of much utility to him. He becomes a mere channel of divine activity, and having lost all sense of personal interest in his acts, he creates no bondage either of virtuous or sinful character by his conduct in life. Action performed by a Buddhi yogi for the Divine devoid of personal attachment is always the most efficient action.

II-53. When your intelligence, bewildered by diverse and conflicting theories or interpretations of scriptures gets composed, doubt-free and stable and fixed in undeviating contemplation, then you shall attain union with Buddhi yoga.

Evolution of man from mental consciousness into Pragya consciousness is possible only when the confusion created by the intellectual mind due to the conflicting expositions of scriptures by followers of different paths, disappears and the mind becomes one-pointed and centered in the unitary Pragya consciousness.

To sum up the essence of the afore-said verses, preliminary qualifications indispensable for evolution of Buddhic consciousness may be summarised as below :—

(1) Action must be performed and not abandoned, but without any desire for fruit. [II-47]

(2) Develop equanimity in all your dealings with the world. Duality must not disturb your mind. [II-48]

(3) All mental attachment to sense objects must be discarded. [II-52]

(4) Do not allow your intellect to run in a fixed groove of mental concepts creating an obstacle for any new thought to enter and thereby making you a fanatic. [II-53]

II-E (4) BUDDHI YOGI'S ANGLE OF VISION IN WORLD CONTACT AND METHODS TO ATTAIN IT. (II—54 to 72)

I. Pragya Buddhi—the next Evolutionary Stage

What is the import of the term Buddhi Yoga ?

It has been said before that the universal nature has been struggling hard to evolve out the Inconscient life of mineral into the semi-conscient life of plant, and then into the sentient life of insects, birds and other animals. Nature has further evolved out the involved mind of the animal into the conscient mind of man. Majority of mankind still lives predominantly in the lower levels of mind called sense-mind. Higher levels are still super-conscient to man, and those who get some glimpses from them are called specially gifted persons or *Vibhooties.* These higher mental levels have not yet touched our waking consciousness, but are in a state of sleep or *Sushupti.* For further evolution it is imperative that they must be awakened and made part of our conscious life. Thus man has first to evolve these levels of higher mental plane and thus to make himself eligible for evolving the still higher Pragya Buddhi consciousness. Pragya consciousness is already inherent within us in our Vigyan-maya-kosh though un-evolved. Geeta lays special stress on the evolution of all these mental and supramental levels of consciousness in dealing with the methods of attaining union with the Pragya consciousness (Buddhi yoga).

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What are the higher mental levels to be evolved ?

The consciousnesses of the higher levels of the mental plane which have yet to be evolved are briefly as follows :—

(a) Higher mind of ethical, religious, humanitarian, altruistic nature.

(b) Intuitive mind in which ideas flow naturally without intervention of intellect and reasoning etc.

(c) Inspired mind is a still higher level in which inspiration plays an important part as in the case of works written by great religious teachers.

(d) Revelatory mind in which there is a direct glimpse of the Truth as in the case of the great Seers of the Upanishads etc.

(e) Over mind is a mental level touching the Supramental or Pragya Buddhi level.

These higher mental levels are not so vibratory as the lower mind, but are of quiet, calm and concentrative character. Intellect needs no searching effort, but becomes stationary, intuitive, inspired or revelatory. It is therefore known as "STHIT DHEE" or settled intellect.

After entry has been attained in the static intellectual level of mind (Sthit dhee), one has to make an entry in the Pragya level of consciousness and become "STHIT PRAGYA". The last step is that of one's firmly establishing himself in the Pragya status by complete union with the Pragya consciousness. He is then known as "PRAGYA PRATISTHIT". Sthitdhee status secures admission into the Sthit-Pragya status, which makes one eligible to become a full-fledged possessor of the Pragya consciousness.

II-E (5) Level of Buddhi Yoga Consciousness

The *subject starts with a question by* Arjun on hearing from Lord Krishna the *efficacy* of Buddhi yoga in human conduct.

II-54 Arjun inquires—How do you define STHIT PRAGYA and Pragya SAMADHISTHA. How does a STHITHDHEE behave in his dealings with the world *i.e.*, how he talks, how he sits and how he moves in society ?

General conception of an advanced yogi is that of a person who abandons all actions and dealings with the world, who sits stoically challenging the extremes of weather without clothes or even without food ; or who shuts himself up in a mountain cave or underground, without breathing, eating or showing any signs of life, or who behaves like a crazy or insane person. The behaviour of a spiritually advanced yogi is thus considered quite different from that of an ordinary man. Arjun, therefore, naturally expresses his curiosity to know whether a Buddhi yogi also behaves in a similar manner, or whether he acts and lives in the world like all of us, though with a different angle of vision in his dealings.

It is a matter of common experience that a strong concentrated attention, effort and perseverance are the prerequisites for achievement of any desired objective, whether material, mental or spiritual. Therefore, if we desire an evolution of our consciousness from lower mental level to the higher mental levels of Sthit Dhee status or to supramental levels of Pragya status the most indispensable condition is a thorough concentration of our mind on that objective. Vibratory condition of mind as a result of attachments to sense objects is the chief obstacle for the descent of any higher power from above The extent to which mind had to be stilled is gradually enlarged from stage to stage, as one advances progressively from Sthit Dhee stage to Sthit Pragya stage, and from Sthit Pragya stage to Pragya Pratisthit stage.

Desire-driven mind is always restless, fleeting and almost invincible. Mind is a universal principle, and man imbibes a fraction of it through his brain of limited capacity, which is its physical vehicle of expression. The greater the

plasticity and opening of the brain, the greater is the out flowing of mental powers That is how we can explain the vast differences in the brain capacities of an idiot, a primitive tribes man, an uneducated, labourer, an intellectualist, a genious, a born inspired poet, or a spiritually advanced *mahatma* possessing powers of occult vision, occult hearing, thought reading etc Mind substance pervades the mental plane as mental elemental essence, and our brain is a receptacle to receive its contents, according to its capacity.

Cosmic mind plane can be compared to a cosmic ocean of mental substance The outer surface of this mental ocean keeps violently vibrating due to the strong breezes and tempestuous storms of sense desires and passions The inner depth of this mental ocean gradually becomes quiet, calm, peaceful, joyful and entirely silent. One has to discover and commune with these inner depths in order to awaken the conscious ness of higher mental level This mental awakening becomes a suitable base for descent of supramental levels of spiritual consciousness Some yogas have prescribed different methods for this achievement but they often prove too technical to be practised without the direct guidance of experts who are not generally available to a common man Geeta does not prescribe any such technical course but takes you to the same goal by practice of the psychological process of non attachment to action and its fruit, treating all works as divine works and complete self-surrender to the divine by Karma yoga, Gyan yoga and Bhakti yoga. Stilling of the surface mind remains an absolutely essential condition for any progress

II E (6)—FIVE STEPS OF PRAGYA REALISATION
II-E (6-a)—FIRST STAGE OF MENTAL QUIET-STHITDHEE—(II-56)

What is the inner mental condition of Sthit-Dhee stage of settled intellect ?

The first attempt of an aspirent is to quieten the vibratory condition of external mind by passively allowing

pleasant or unpleasant sensations to pass in a detached attitude, without allowing the mental peace to be disturbed. "Quiet is a mental consciousness within, which sees thoughts *arrive to it and move about, but does not itself feel that it is* thinking or identifying itself with the thoughts or call them its own." (Shri Aurobindo)

Thoughts continue to work in mind consciously, but one keeps himself detached from them. They come like a flight of birds over the calm waters of an ocean, and pass away unnoticed creating no disturbance on the surface.

II-56. The Lord says that when one does not get upset by unpleasant sensations, and does not attach himself to pleasant sensations, and when his attachment, fear and anger with them vanish, he is said to have attained the settled intellect of Sthit-Dhee status of a mentally evolved Muni.

II-E (6-b)—SECOND STAGE—STHIT-PRAGYA (MENTAL CALM) (II-55)

What is inner mental condition of a Sthit-Pragya ?

Pragya is the supramental consciousness of the Mahar lok beyond the highest levels of mental plane. One who enters this region finds that his mind has no taste for thought-provoking desires, and no desire-propelled thoughts have any attraction for him. His mind on the other hand finds satisfaction and intense attraction, in contemplation of his self, the Atma (Atmana Tushtah). His Antaratma then finds real satisfaction solely in the absorption of his mind in his higher self, and no more in desire-propelled thoughts as before. It is the consciousness of "Mental Calm", a still unmoved condition which no disturbance can affect.

II-55. The Lord thus says that when an aspirant abolishes the movement of all desire-propelled thoughts from his mind, and when his inner being finds satisfaction

in nothing but in his higher self, he is then described as Sthit-Pragya.

II-E (6-c) THIRD STAGE—MENTAL JOY OF PRAGYA-PRATISTHIT (II-57 to 65)

What is the mental outlook of one who is firmly established in Pragya Consciousness, *i.e.* of a Pragya' Pratisthit ?

The said two steps of mental quiet and mental calm are the stepping stones for attaining the third joyful stage of Pragya Consciousness. First of all one has to develop a passive outlook towards pleasant or unpleasant thoughts of sense desires. Then he has to see that desire thoughts do not at all arise in his mind. But neither of these mental states can be achieved until he touches the very source of desire distractions. Sense attractions are mainly responsible for desires, creating disharmony in our mental peace It thus becomes necessary not only to abstain senses from attachments to sense objects, but also to abolish their relish from the mind, in order to abolish the very cause of sense attractions By abolition of relish in sense-objects one becomes indifferent to pleasant or unpleasant experiences. One who succeeds in this practice evolves Pragya consciousness in himself as a settled principle for guiding his life's activities.

II-57. The Lord says that he must be deemed as having established in Pragya' consciousness, who has liberated himself from attachment and affection for whatever comes to happen, whether pleasant or unpleasant and who neither rejoices in pleasant experiences nor feels upset by unpleasant ones.

II-58. He should be deemed to have become Pragya-Pratisthit who withdraws his senses from sense-objects

like a tortoise drawing in his limbs inside the outer shell.

II-59. An ascetic by hard penances and inanition (Niraharasya) succeeds in ostensibly getting over the sense objects, but their inner relish continues to stick on, but a Pragya Pratisthit gets over the charm even of such relish, since he realises the highest relish of his Supreme Self.

Mere outer withdrawal from sense objects is not enough for sense control. It is the inner withdrawal that is to be practised, a withdrawal to higher levels that will in itself bring that outer harmonisation which is essential for attainment of Buddhi yoga. Relish of sense objects has to be transferred to the relish and ecstatic joy of the vision of the self.

What is the practical method of obtaining control over the attraction and relish of sense objects by this restless mind ?

II-60. Lord says that even the mind of the wise though constantly labouring for sense control is swept away by the head strong senses.

FIRST METHOD OF SURRENDER TO THE DIVINE HELP

II-61. Having brought all the senses under control he (the aspirant) should sit firm in yoga wholly surrendering himself to the Divine. Pragya' Consciousness gets firmly established in him whose senses are brought under control.

Here Lord Krishna introduces the intervention of Divine help to aid a man's personal efforts to bring his senses and mind under control. Senses are too subtle and

strong to be brought under control by one's personal efforts, even of severe austere types Divine aid is indispensable to subdue them and therefore, Arjun is advised to surrender himself to the Divine for guidance and further progress

SECOND METHOD OF ELIMINATING THE ROOT CAUSE OF SENSE ATTRACTION

What is the root cause of attractions of senses to sense objects, at times leading to the loss of reason even of the wisest in his world behaviour ?

Geeta lays down subtle psychological movements of mental state giving rise to sense attractions, which gradually precipitate in disastrous consequences Sometimes very insignificant beginnings if not checked in time, develop into unthought of, horrible complications. Sense attractions usually have a very insignificant origin, to check which no special tangible effort is needed. But if not nipped in the bud they assume the power of a devil which no human effort can subdue

II-62 Lord Shri Krishna thus proceeds to say that a person musing on sense objects creates mental attachment for them This attachment leads to a desire for their possession and enjoyment, which if not satisfied, besieges him with anger

II-63 Anger leads to bewilderment of reason, which in turn deludes his memory, and makes him forget the consequences that a passion-driven action usually brings in its train. The deluded memory destroys reason, and loss of reason leads to perdition

The safest master-key to control senses is to nip the very thought of desire in its very inception If you once attach your thought to the sense objects you get engulfed in a morass of mental complications Thus the

sooner the sense thought is noticed to enter our mind, we must at once consciously dispel it by replacing it by a corresponding higher thought. The whole trail resulting by cherishing that thought is thus easily evaded. This is a principle of immense importance to be always borne in mind in our behaviour withl the world. It gradually leads to sense control, and above all proves of great efficacy in saving us from many pitfall and calamities.

Physical withdrawal of senses from sense objects by harsh ascetic methods does not result in real sense control. Unless the relish for sense objects disappears no ostensible sense-control is dependable. That accounts for the fact that even some well advanced yogis are sometimes found to have had bad falls. The aforesaid master-key of nipping the desire thought in the bud, gradually abolishes not only attraction, but also relish of sense objects, even while living and acting in their midst in the world. The ascetic practice of keeping the senses artificially deprived of sense object by withdrawal from the world, indicates the yogi's lack of confidence in his senses, which unless kept in strict confinement may run riot.

Sense control in true sense must be devoid of any such fear or non-confidence. Relish of sense objects if mentally prevented in its very inception gradually brings about real sense control. Then and then only can a man act in the world confidently with his senses free from all attachment to sense objects, and thereby enjoys Divine Bliss in carrying on Divine work through his body, mind and senses as channels of Divine action.

Sense Control Results In Mental Joy.

II-64 The Lord says that a man who has subdued his lower self (of ego, mind and senses) is led into mental Bliss (Prasada), even while moving with his self-controlled senses free from attachment or repulsion in the very midst of sense objects.

II-65 In that joyful state of mind all his sorrows and dis appointments get dissolved He being suffused with mental joy, Pragya consciousness soon get firmly established in Him.

Arjun's question about the behaviour of a Pragya Pratisthit yogi is here answered in emphatic terms, that he behaves like any of us in the world though with a different angle of vision. He does not leave the world nor becomes a recluse, busy in slaying his senses and body Along with personal efforts for self-control he invokes Divine aid by surrendering his whole being to the Divine. This double process thus makes it possible for him to firmly unite himself with Pragya Consciousness, and thereby to awaken his dormant Vigyana Maya Kosh of Divine wisdom.

II-E—(6 d) Fourth stage of Mental Peace (Shanti) (II—66 to 71.)

Mental peace is the essential characteristic of a Buddhi yogi, which he acquires by surrender to the Divine, and by abolition of relish of sense objects. Concentrated divine aspiration is a prerequisite for such surrender, but it can not be acquired by distracted mind, and no mental peace is possible for him

II 66 The Lord says that for one who has not united himself with Pragya Buddhi, there is neither pure Reason, nor is there for the un-united a concentrated divine aspiration, nor is there mental peace for such distracted mind How can such restless mind experience happiness ?

II 67 If the mind of an aspirant attaches itself to any of the roving senses, his Pragya consciousne s at once sinks down like a boat capsizing in the waters by a gale of wind.

II-68 Therefore, it is indispensable that one must thoroughly restrain his senses from being attracted by sense objects,

and it is only then that Pragya consciousness gets firmly established.

It has been pointed out that one has to progressively develop higher and higher levels of mind for arriving at the supramental Pragya consciousness. The first three stages of developing Mental Quiet, Mental Calm, and Mental Joy have been dealt upon in the aforesaid verses. Now Geeta proceeds to deal with the fourth stage of Mental peace. A Buddhi yogi does not abandon action but only abolishes relish. He acts in the world like all others by the usual interaction of senses upon sense objects. He having awakened higher mental consciousness no more remains awake or distracted and attached to impacts of sense objects, like ordinary persons whose waking consciousness remains solely confined to desires and sense attractions. That is the reason why a Buddhi yogi lives in mental peace, while a worldly man has no taste of it. According to Shri Aurobindo, Peace is a still more positive condition. It carries with it a sense of harmonious rest and deliverance. Sense objects have no effect on senses, and even the idea of relish disappears.

II-69 The Lord says that the mental peace and joy in which a sense-controlled sage remains awake, is a state of sleep to all worldly beings. The lower restless levels of consciousness in which the worldly beings remain awake, is a state of sleep to the sage who sees the Truth.

II-70 Just as water of turbulent rivers enter a brimful ocean without disturbing its settled calm, similarly all sorts of desires flow in the peaceful consciousness of a Buddhi yogi without upsetting his mental peace. Such a yogi attains mental peace, and not a desire-driven person.

Geeta insists on continuance of action by a Buddhi yogi. It only supercedes the desire-driven outlook by the Buddhic outlook of a detached unegoistic character.

II-71 A person who moves in the world devoid of all desires and egoism, in a detached manner free from all yearnings, attains the status of Mental Peace.

II E (6-e) Fifth stage of Silence—Param Shanti (II-72)

The Peace (Shanti) acquired by a Buddhi yogi opens the door for the next higher stage of Brahman Nirvana. One who has attained Pragya consciousness of Divine wisdom realises the unitary status of Dynamic Sachchidananda Brahma, because his separative consciousness gets transformed into Cosmic Brahman consciousness. Brahman Nirvana status is a still higher Divine condition of Static Akshar Brahman. The yogi feels liberated by merging his individual Dynamic Being into the static Akshar Brahma status. The Peace of Kshar Brahma consciousness is termed as Shanti in Ch. II, Verses 66, 70 & 71 : Ch. V. Verse 29. The higher peace of silence of the Akshar Brahma status is described as the Higher Peace of Nirvana (Shanti Nirvana parmam) in Ch. VI, Verse 15, IV—39.

II-72 This is the Brahmi status by realisation of which a man is no more deluded by world attractions. Establishing himself in this consciousness till the time of his death, he realises the Eternal Peace of Brahma Nirvana.

Thus ends the Second Chapter entitled
SANKHYA—YOGA

CHAPTER III

KARMA YOGA

III A (1) ARJUN'S CONFUSION ABOUT ACTION & IN-ACTION (III—1 to 3)

The main theme of this chapter is centred round the nature of the mental outlook with which action has to be performed in this world. An ordinary man even of the highest moral, religious and social order like Arjun performs world action with a lurking sense of desired fruits, and of egoistic satisfaction of name, fame and honour, of success or failure, of gain or loss, of pleasure or pain and so on All such mental background of action can never lead him to the highest spiritual wellbeing Arjun was therefore advised to act and fight not with such outlook but with the detached Buddhic outlook, which would result not only in his material happiness, but alsc in his spiritual well being. Arjun's mind being confused does not catch the main thread of the subtle arguments of Lord Krishna, and finds fault with his advice. He naturally asks if Buddhi yoga leads to such pinnacles of spiritual height, eternal peace and joy, why was he being persuaded to take up the challenge of war ?

III-1 Arjun argues with Lord Krishna saying that if according to your own view Buddhi yoga is superior to Karma, why was he being persuaded to indulge in this terrible action of war

III-2 These perplexing words of yours confuse my understanding, therefore give me one decisive solution which may lead to my well being

We have to again throw a glance at the background of circumstances which enervated Arjun's mental faculty to arrive at a proper decisive action Coming face to face

with his close relations, friends, teachers and most venerable leaders of the time in the battle-field, Arjun was besieged by his old personal affection and he refused to face a bloody warfare aginst them He preferred to withdraw from the world and lead the life of an ascetic discarding all actions rather than to induldge in the massacre of his own kith and kin The question before him was whether to live and act like a beast in the world and to face the battle of Kurukshetra or to withdraw from all actions of a Sankhya yogi to be or not to be was his problem

Action is the natural law of the terrestrial existence If one finds this normal law an impediment, the only alternative is Inaction

III-3 Lord Krishna thus says that in this world of action two ideals for the conduct of life have been pointed out by me in the past One of the Sankhya yogis by Gyan yoga and the other of Karma yogis by Karma yoga

Lord Krishna prefers the second alternative

III A (2) ACTION IS PREFERABLE TO INACTION
(III—4 to 9)

What are the grounds for supporting the theory of Action in preference to one of withdrawal from Action ?

III-4 The Lord says that a man cannot obtain freedom from the bondage of action by abstaining from its commencement Nor can he attain perfection by physical withdrawal from action

All actions result in psychological bondage of sin or virtue, and such bondage is the effective cause of rebirths The true wisdom lies in the performance of actions with such wisdom which would create no such resulting bondage It is this mental attitude of action which a Karma yogi employs by the special technique of wisdom in the conduct of his activities in life, and succeeds in evading the bondage of his actions This is described as

the 'Naishkarma Siddhi" of a Karma yogi in Ch. XVIII-49. Neither abstinence from commencement of action, nor withdrawal from the world can be a means of achieving this perfection.

III-5. The Lord further says that no one can afford to remain actionless even for a moment, for everything is being helplessly driven to action by the inherent tendencies of Gunas generated by Nature.

III 6. Therefore one who abstains from action by violent suppression of his senses, but continues to think of the relish of sense objects, such a bewildered man is called a hypocrite.

III-7. A distinguished worker is one who regulates his senses by mental control (Niyamya), and indulges through them in Karma yoga devoid of attachment.

The word "Niyamya" means reasonably regulated, in contrast to the word "Nigraha" which means forcible suppression. Geeta does not support the ascetic discipline of forcibly starving out the senses and violently curbing their natural tendencies by inanition or by paralysing their natural functions. It prescribes a psychological method to regulate their functions Actions resulting from such regulated senses will be regulated actions (Niyamam Karma). It is such regulated action that a Karma yogi is enjoined upon to perform, and not desire-initiated actions. (Shri Aurobindo—Essays on Gita)

III-8. The Lord says—you should perform such regulated actions, because action is superior to inaction. Without action even life's journey cannot be successfully performed

III-9. All actions excepting those that are performed for the sake of yagna create bondage in this world. Therefore, you should perform all actions, O Kaunteya ! free from attachment in the best possible manner for the sake of yagya.

III-B (I) YAGNA OR THE COSMIC PROCESS OF SACRIFICE (III—10)

What is that Yagna for the sake of which actions have to be performed ?

The great importance is given to the performance of yagna, and it has been enjoined upon as an imperative daily duty for every man to perform it. As generally understood Yagna means an intricate and elaborate ritual carried on strictly in accordance with the technical procedure involving heavy expenditure with the sole object of fulfilment of various selfish interest and ambitions. Its performance therefore became confined only to a few well-to-do persons, kings or saints who could command large donations from the public. It no longer remained part of daily duty of an average man. It is this narrow view of Yagna which Geeta has vehemently condemned in Ch. II-42 to 46. Geeta develops the original Cosmic sense of the term "Yagna" and enjoins upon every man to co-operate with that Cosmic process to the best of his ability, and to make such participation in this Divine Yagna as a guiding principle of the activities of his life.

Yagna is a Cosmic principle of Divine sacrifice working out dynamically the creation of this multiple existence. The Creator Brahmman is said to have brought "Yagna" in existence along with the creation of multiple beings. The term "Yagna" literally means sacrifice implying the sense of transformation and change. The one Divine willed to become many and involving himself in Nature sacrificed his very identity and power being encaged in multiple forms of created existence. One could not have possibly become many without such an energy of transformation by the process of yagna, which is the dynamic expression of Kshar Energy of the Divine. This energy called Nature galvanises the minutest atom in this existence.

Shri Aurobindo says, all being and all action of Prakriti exists only for the sake of the Divine, from that it proceeds,

by that it endures, to that it is directed. All life, all world existence is the sacrifice offered by Nature to the Purush, the one and secret soul in Nature, in whom all her workings take place. But its real sense is obscured in us by ego, by desire, by our limited, active, multiple personality. So long as we are dominated by the ego sense we cannot percieve or act in the spirit of this truth, but act for the satisfaction of the ego and in the spirit of the ego, otherwise then for yagna (sacrifice). Egoism is the knot of the bondage by acting Godwards without any thought of ego (yagna) we loosen this knot and finally arrive at freedom.

III-10. Lord Krishna says—the Lord of creation having created in ancient past multiple creatures along with yagna, said that by means of this yagna you shall propagate and prosper and may it be the giver of all your cherished desires.

III-B (2) HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS COSMIC YAGNA (III—11)

Please point out the process by which one should participate in this Cosmic Yagna? If the Divine is the presiding conscious principle behind the yagna, why is it that the names of various cosmic nature gods are associated with the yagna rituals?

Yagna is the process of sacrifice which the Divine Brahman undergoes by involving himself in nature, stage by stage, up to the last inconscient mineral state. A stone, as we see, it is not a dead mass of matter, but involved within it, lies a subjective principle which forces itself out by evolution for self-expression as conscient life of plant, animal and man. Adoration of this involved spirit in matter is the inner sense behind the "Parthiv" worship so common among the Hindoos.

As a result of this creative Cosmic principle of the Divine yagna, the Brahma has by gradual stages involved

himself in the entire existence, which is therefore described as the habitation of God (Isha vasum idam sarvam). In the initial stages of manifestation, were created Cosmic energies of various planes, such as energies of Cosmic Buddhi, Cosmic Mind, Cosmic Senses and Cosmic Matter. It is by the manipulation of these energies that the multiple creation on the physical plane has come into existence. Each energy possesses involved within its own central subjective principle to preside, control, and guide its activity. This central conscious principle of each Cosmic Energy is called deity or deva. The Cosmic yagna eternally continues its working in all the universal plane through these nature gods. A man has to co-operate with these gods for partaking in the Divine yagna by becoming a link in the Cosmic chain of manifestation He thus fosters and appeases nature gods, who in turn reciprocate by fostering and appeasing him.

A man imbibes limited powers of these nature gods through the limited capacities of his senses, mind and body. But by deep communion with these gods he can enhance these powers immeasurably Mind reading, television, tele-audience, tele-presence, levitation and many other occult powers or *siddhies* are the gifts that these nature gods can confer upon one. But they are not to be utilised for the purpose of serving selfish aims, but for evolving out his limited ego self into universality, equal vision and ultimately in the Divine consciousness. Nature gods are thus the chief mediums through whose help a man can dissolve his ego and can become a universal being, a universal worker and a true participator in the Cosmic Yagna. So long as this ego is not dissolved and a man does not contact with the universal powers of his inner physical, inner vital, and inner mental, his entry in the spiritual world of the Lord of yagna is blocked. It is thus through the medium of these gods that one can discover his inner self and become an unegoistic divine worker. That is why so much importance is given to their worship in the Hindoo system of house-hold life. This mutual intercourse between man and god is essential for the

purpose of co-operating in the Cosmic process of Divine Yagna.

An egoistic person instead of linking himself to Cosmic Yagna gets out of rails in pursuit of selfish aims He thus creates a whirlpool for himself eddying round and round helplessly to the lowest depths, instead of floating forward in the rapid stream of Cosmic evolution Nature gods thus play an important role in the Cosmic Yagna and each of them is therefore invited for appeasement in the Yagna rituals

The following quotation from the Fifty Principles of Theosophy Ch XI by Shri Jinraj Das may be very aptly reproduced here The conception that the life energies in nature do not work blindly, not haphazard, but are guided by Builders is not only novel to most, but startling to many. Yet the idea is as old as the hills Mankind has ever believed in the greater invisible workers, the Angels and Devas, that rule planets and stars and that patron saints guide the destinies of nations. The belief in the lesser invisible workers is equally widespread, fairies of earth, water, air, fire are well-known in oriental traditions Myriads of builders great and small are ever at work, building cells, guiding organs to form moulding and colouring flowers Nature is truly a factory, but so vast and stupendous that the imagination of man can but stand dazed at the sight of her many creations.

This is what we may grasp as an infinitesimally small conception of the Cosmic machinery of the Divine Yagna, which the Yagna Purush is eternally busy rotating with the sole object of evolving out the involved spirit of inanimate mineral to its original Divine status Geeta thus lays special stress on the performance of action in full co-operation with this Cosmic Scheme of Yagna with the aid of nature gods

The Lord Shri Krishna thus points out the process by which one should participate in the Cosmic Yagna.

Certain ...

III-11. He says that the creator Brahman declared that through this Yagna may you appease and nourish the nature gods, and may these gods in return appease and nourish you. By such mutual interchange of each others' good will (Bhava), you shall attain the supreme goal.

III B (3) HOW TO APPEASE NATURE GODS AND HOW DO THEY RESPOND ? (III—12 & 13)

If the appeasement of nature gods is necessary to enable a man to participate in the Cosmic yagna, what should be the process of doing so ?

The believers in the theistic conception of the gods of various energies and nature, have allotted suitable physical forms for them to facilitate mental contemplation and aspiration for communicating with those energies. With great emotion and love they adore these gods of physical elements like Sun, Varuna, Maroot etc., planatory gods, sense gods and gods of mind. (Indra), Buddhi (Ganesh), Ego (Rudra), of universal nature (the divine mother) and even of the Divine (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva) and many others. They should not however confine that adoration to the formal ritual alone, but must concentrate with aspiration on the energies they represent. This would be the easiest way for the material mind to commune with them for universalising the energies of one's limited physical, vital and mental nature.

But one who has no faith in such theistic conceptions may concentrate his entire motive force on the enhancement of the powers of natural faculties of the organs of his body, senses, mind and intellect by persistent endeavour with the object of universalising their capacities. As a result of communing with these universal gods (energies) one can develop extraordinary powers of his body, senses, mind and intellect in tune with their corresponding universal energies.

His narrow egoistic outlook is thereby universalised and he gets transformed into a universal being, a divine worker free from narrow egoistic outlook, and a true partcipator in the Cosmic yagna.

The universal powers or *siddhies* that these gods confer for universalising one's self, by dissolution of ego they are not to be used for personal gain, name or fame ; but are to be utilised to serve the Nature's objective of universal uplift, happiness and evolution. This is the object of mutual intercourse between gods and man referred to as "parasparam Bhava-yantah" in the Geeta. If these gifts of gods are appropriated by a man for selfish objects, and not utilised in the interest of the gods seated in the heart of humanity (Daridra Narayana) is in fact a thief of these gifts. We are thus called upon to utilise for our personal ends only the remnants of these bounties of nature that are left after the requirements of yagna are satisfied. Instead of self aggrandizement a house-holder must consider it his duty to satisfy the needs of his family, community, country and humanity according to his capacity, and enjoy the remnants for his personal needs. This ideal being beyond the normal capacity of an individual it is the Socialistic Group or government which should look to the general happiness of the society, and an individual should contribute his mite in the fulfilment of that task. The society must be maintained by the Socialistic Group for its economic, social and spiritual uplift. This is how an individual and the social group should participate in the divine scheme of existence for revolution of mankind.

III-12. The Lord says that the creator Brahman further declares that being nourished by yagna, the devas shall bestow on you the enjoyments you desire. But one who appropriates and enjoys these bounties exclusively for himself, without allotting or returning proper share of them to serve the object of the devas, is verily a thief.

III-13. The righteous who eat the remnants of yagna are free from all sins. But those unrighteous persons who try to digest the entire gift of nature for their own selfish gratification verily eat sin itself.

III-B (4) YAGNA IS A COSMIC ROTATING WHEEL OF CREATION (III—14 to 16)

How this activity of Cosmic yagna is related to its Divine origin ?

In order to understand the origin of the process of yagna, it becomes necessary to trace the various stages of Divine manifesfation in this existence. The supreme Divine first menifests as Akshar (Static), which is the potential static form of existence. As manifestation proceeds, He assumes a dynamic form as Kshar Brahman. This all pervading Brahman gives birth to Cosmic motion and activity (Karma). The Cosmic motion or the Cosmic Karma results in yagna, the process of fusion and transformation of primordial atoms into elements of nature like rain, air, heat etc., technically called *Parjanya.* The word "*Parjanya*" is derived from Prajana, the process of pro-creation. These elements of nature all come within the scope of Parjanya and not necessarily rain alone, because they all equally contribute in the pro-creation of eatables like grass, vegetables or grain, which in turn promotes the pro-creation of multiple creatures. This Cosmic chain of the Hierarchy of man is thus throughout pervaded by the Cosmic Kshar Brahman.

The terrestrial existence is thus virtually a dynamic mechanical Plant of Cosmic nature containing wheels within wheels of various departments of manifested stages, eternally rotating and shaping out the raw material of mineral, plant, animal and man by involution and thereafter, evolving the same into the finished product of super-man by the process of evolution. Downward cycle of this revolving wheel is

that of involution of spirit by sacrifice link by link up to the last stage of matter. The upward cycle is the continuation of the same process of eternal sacrifice (Yagna) but as a process of Evolution of the spirit involved in matter to its original Divine status.

All creatures including man are virtually riding on this machine on which they are being helplessly rotated round and round by repeated births and deaths by Ishwar. (Bhramayan sarva bhutani yantra-rudhani mayaya-XVIII-61). A man is in the habit of obstructing the smooth running of this Divine machine. Instead of co-operating with its working he begins to utilise the powers that are thereby evolved in him for his selfish personal gains and is therefore cought within the teeth of its numerous wheels. If on the other hand, he acts in consonance with the Divine plan of this machine of Cosmic yagna for universal well-being and personal uplift, he in the long run evolves out as a model product of a Divine worker, and ultimately enters within the Divine embrace.

The Lord gives the description of this Cosmic rotating machine in the following verses :—

III-14. Creatures owe their procreation to matter (Anna or food), while food is the product of elements of Nature like rain, earth, sun and air (Parjanya). These elements of nature are the creations of the law of Cosmic sacrifice (Yagna) by transformation, and yagna is the outcome of the Cosmic action.

III-15. The Cosmic action (Karma) proceeds from the dynamic Brahman (Kshara), which in turn originates from Akshar. Therefore, the all-pervading Brahman remains ever established in the Cosmic Yagna-dynamism of this existence.

III-16. He who does not act in this world in consonance with this Cosmic wheel thus set in motion, and leads a sinful life rejoicing in sense enjoyments has in fact been living in vain, O son of Partha !

The universal law of existence is through and through a Divine process of Sacrifice (Yagna), and man being a creature of that law is expected to make sacrifice the guiding principle of his life. One who indulges in the narrow limits of a sinful life, in personal aggrandizements and sense enjoyments is virtually a rebel against the Divine plan. Instead of marching on the path of evolution he remains entangled in the clutches of the retarding lower nature and he thereby wastes his life

The description of Yagna in this chapter is figuratively given in the language, which taken by itself might seem to be speaking only of the ceremonial sacrifice Chapter IV deals with the same subject in the sense of a large, philosophical symbolism transforms at once its whole significance and raises it to a plane of high psychological and spiritual Truth Shri Aurobindo says that in the Geeta there is very little that is merely local or temporal, and its spirit is so large profound and universal that even this little can easily be universalised without the sense of the teaching suffering any diminution or violation, rather by giving an ampler scope to it than belongs to the country and epoch, the teaching gains in depth, truth and power Thus it dwells on the ancient Indian system and idea of sacrifice as an interchange between gods and man We find here a sense so entirely subtle, figurative and symbolic given to the word "Sacrifice", and the conception of the gods is so little local or mythological, so entirely Cosmic and philosophical, that we can easily accept both as expressive of a practical fact of psychology and the general law of Nature, and so apply them to the modern conceptions of interchange between life and life, and of ethical sacrifice and self giving, as to widen and deepen these and cast over them a more spiritual aspect and the light of a profounder and more far-reaching Truth

III-C (1) COSMIC ACTION OF YAGNA IS INDISPENSABLE EVEN FOR A SELF-REALISED PERSON (III—17 to 19)

Is it not unnecessary for a yogi to continue acting in the *world even for the sake of yagna, after he has* visualised the bliss of individual self ?

Performance of desireless actions in the spirit of sacrifice and self-giving to the Cosmic yagna loosen the knot of ego, and develops a *sense of universality. A man then realises* that he is not the ego-self, mental-self, desire-self or even the physical-self, with which he was wont to identify *him-self so long; but that he is in truth the* spiritual-self. Finding himself liberated from the bondage of mind and sense attractions he visualises his inner self, and experiences highest ecstasy far beyond the reach of his mind and senses. All old sources of sensual and mental pleasures *dependent on outer objects leave no charm for him, He* sees no utility in the performance of actions as before, for obtaining heart's satisfaction and contentment, which used to be indispensable for squeezing out pleasure from sense objects.

Naturally a question arises whether it remains at all necessary to continue the performance of action for a man who has attained this status of self-realisation, because he has nothing to gain by action or lose by inaction. Abandonment of action after *self-realisation may be justified,* if such realisation amounts to the supreme attainment of the Divine. But this *is not so. Self-realisation is the first step of entry in the Spiritual realms.* The individual self has to be universalised and one has to realise his self as the selves of all, and all selves as part and parcel of the Cosmic Self He thus realises the second stage the dynamic Sagun Brahman realisation and transforms himself into a Divine worker. Participation in the *Divine yagna becomes* a normal feature of his nature, and no question of withdrawal from action has any relevancy for him Action thus *becomes a necessary medium for* this realisation.

There is a third stage of spiritual realisation of the static Nirguna Brahman which is in fact the strata on which the dynamic Saguna Brahman operates the world activity by the process of Cosmic yagna. Realisation of Supreme Peace and Silence, while performing actions for the sake of the Divine plan amounts to the attainment of the immutability of Nirgun Brahman. There is the fourth stage of spiritual realm which is the Supreme Divine status of Purushottam of which Akshar and Kshar are the manifested aspects. Thus performance of action as a Divine worker is necessary for this Supreme attainment. Therefore, it is incumbent even for one who has realised his self not to abandon action but to continue to perform them free from attachment and self interest.

III-17. The Lord thus says that there certainly remains no work to be done for one, who has absorbed himself in the delight of his-self who finds heart's satisfaction in nothing but self, and who is content with self and self alone.

III-18. For him there remains no objective to be achieved by action, nor is there anything to be lost by inaction, nor dces any object of his depend for fulfilment on any of the outer objects or beings.

III-19. But because it is only by performance of action free from attachment, that he can attain the Supreme Divine status, and therefore, he should continue to perform actions to the best of his ability free from attachment.

III-C (2) MOTIVE OF ACTION OF A SELF-REALISED PERSON (III—20 & 21)

Since there remains no motive for undertaking action by a self-realised person, will not his action in the absence of a motive amount to a disinterested, dry mechanism ?

Every initiation of action gathers enthusiasm only because it has the driving force of a motive behind. In the

absence of a motive an action is normally reduced to a dry uninteresting and listless mechanism. What should then be the motive or impulse behind the actions of self-realised person ? Geeta here points out the motive that should drive him to act not disinterstedly and mechanically but with full enthusiasm. His ambition in his activities must be directed not only for his personal progress, but also to aid the Divine plan of evolution by holding together the peoples in order to lead them on the Divine path. He should act as a Divine teacher to uplift the masses like Buddhá who refused to seek the personal *Nirvana* till the humanity had evolved by his teachings He should act like a shepherd keeping together the herd of sheep on their path in the forest for their safe home-return. He should remain always on guard to see that no sheep goes astray to become a prey of wild animals He has thus to keep himself in close touch with the masses, and to guide them by personal example and guidance as was done in the past by Janak and others. Personal example is always more efficacious than the preaching of precepts. Personal conduct and behaviour of the wise has its own direct influence on the conduct of the masses, who prefer to follow and imitate the living example of a teacher, rather than his terse, philosophical discourse of discursive nature.

Geeta proceeds to expound these principles of a Divine worker as follows :

III-20. The Lord says that it was only by means of desireless and detached action that Janak and others achieved the status of highest perfection. Even having an eye on the welfare of the people by keeping them together on the Divine path (Lok Sangraha), it is but fitting that you must resort to Karma.

III-21. The conduct that an advanced person displays by his living example is followed by other people. The people imitate and follow the standard of conduct that he thus sets up.

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III-21. The conduct that an advanced person displays by his living example is followed by other people. The people imitate and follow the standard of conduct that he thus sets up.

The term "Lok Sangraha" is generally interpreted in the pragmatic sense of social, patriotic, altruistic prohumanitarian service. But Shri Aurobindo gives it a spiritual interpretation in the literal sense of the term. (Lok people, Sangraha-keeping together). The outlook of the Geeta is universal, and not so narrow or parochial as to preach that a liberated person should hold together the people by inculcating the ideals of casteism, linguism, provincialism, nationalism, fanatic religionism, socialism, communism, or other multifarious "isms", as is the tendency of the modern leaders of the world. A liberated person is enjoined upon to inculcate in the masses the spiritual principles which have become part and parcel of his daily conduct in life. He will thereby keep the humanity on the Divine path as was done in the past by Rama, Krishna, Janak, Buddha, Christ and other great souls.

Shri Aurobindo says that there are few more important passages in Geeta than these seven couplets (III—20 to 26). But let us clearly understand that they must not be interpreted, (as the modern pragmatic tendency, concerned much more with the present affairs of the world than with any high and far-off spiritual possibility, seeks to interpret them) as no more than the philosophical and religious justification of social service, patriotic, cosmopolitan, and humanitarian effort and attachment to the hundred eager social schemes and dreams which attract the modern intellect. It is not the rule of a large moral and intellectual altruism which is here concerned, but that of a spiritual unity with God and with the world of beings to dwell in Him and in whom He dwells. It is not an injunction to subordinate the individual to Society and humanity, or immolate egoism on the alter of human collectivity, but to fulfil the individual in God, and to sacrifice the ego on the one true alter of the all-embracing Divinity. The Geeta moves on a plane of ideas and experiences higher than those of the modern mind, which is........still mundane in its outlook and intellectual and moral rather than spiritual in its temperament. Patriotism,

cosmopolitanism, service of society collectivism, humanitarianism, the ideal or religion of humanity are admirable aids towards our escape from our primary condition of individual family, social, national egoism into a secondary stage in which the individual realises on the intellectual, moral and emotional level, the one-ness of his existence with the existence of other beings. But the thought of the Geeta which is beyond to a tertiary (Third order) condition of our developing self-consciousness towards which the said secondary is only a partial stage of advance.

To exalt one-self out of the lower imperfect *Prakriti* into unity with the Divine being, consciousness and nature namely with Sayujya, Salokya and Sadharma status, is the object of the Yoga. But when this object is fulfilled, then the man is in the Brahmic status, and sees no longer with the false egoistic vision himself and the world, but sees all beings in the self, in God, and the Self in all beings, God in all beings. What shall be his action, since action there still is which results from that seeing, and what shall be the cosmic or individual motive of all his works ?

The motive cannot be personal desire on the intellectual, moral or emotional level, for that has been abandoned, and even the moral motive has been abandoned since the liberated man has passed beyond the lower distinction of sin and virtue and lives in a glorified purity beyond good and evil. His motive of action can only be the holding together of the peoples (Chikirshur loke sangraham). This great march of the peoples towards a far-off Divine ideal has to be held together, prevented from falling into the bewilderment, confusion and utter discord of the understanding which would lead to dissolution and destruction and to which the world moving forward in the night or dark twilight of ignorance would be too easily prone, if it were not held together, conducted, kept to the great lines of its discipline by the illumination, by the strength, by the rule and example, by the visible standard and the invisible influence of the Best.

III—C (3) STANDARD OF CONDUCT OF A YOGI MUST BE DIVINE STANDARD (III—22 to 24)

What standard of conduct should a liberated person set before the world ?

The divinised man is the Best in no ordinary sense of the word. His influence, his example must have a power which that of no ordinary superior man can exercise. A liberated person possessing freedom from world attractions and living in Divine consciousness moves about in the world incessantly busy in fulfilling the Divine plan as the Divine himself does in this dynamic existence. In order to indicate more precisely why a divinised person should continue to act in the world, the divine Teacher gives his own example, his own standard which he should follow.

III-22. Lord Krishna says, O son of Partha ! I have no work that I need to do in all the three worlds, I have nothing that I have not attained and have yet to attain, but still I act on the path of action.

III-23. For if by chance I do not sleeplessly abide in the path of action, all men will follow in every way my path.

III-24. All planes of existence would crumble down to dust if I cease to work ; and I would be the creator of confusion and the instrument of desolation of the created existence.

It is due to the fixity of the working of the eternal laws of Nature that a man has been able to discover many mysteries of nature's forces by the aid of modern science. If you sow a seed, it is bound to grow into a tree of the same species. If this eternal law is capricious, there is no guarantee that a mangoe seed would grow into a mangoe tree and not into a tamarind tree. The whole fabric of existence would then be in unimaginable danger of confusion and collapse (Sankarasyam), and may lead to utter destruction. Planets may alter their speed and course and may come to a collision with each other in the space. It is this mathema-

tical accuracy and the eternal Truth of the laws of nature that result in making this existence a cosmos and not a chaos. If the Divine is so vigilant in his eternal complex dynamism, why should a man act otherwise? Our existence is the creature of this eternal law of the Divine. A man who does not conform his conduct with this *Sanatan-dharma* (eternal law) is certainly an anti-Divine monster. This is in short the cosmic mysterious wisdom of action implied in the term *Sanatan-dharma*, of which the Hindoo society is a staunch adherent. A liberated person is a true follower of this Sanatan-dharma and the world must follow his example.

III—C (4) A LIBERATED TEACHER MUST BE A PRACTICAL MAN OF ACTION (III—25 & 26)

The technique that a liberated person should employ to transform the nature of his fellow-men should not be a direct criticism of their conduct and existing faith. He should, on the other hand, patiently proceed to revolutionise their conduct by setting an example of his own conduct in dealing with the world. Any amount of lecturing or long discourses on religious scripture has its own indirect benefit, but it hardly goes deep down in the heart to transform nature. Example is decidedly far more efficacious than precept. He is, therefore, advised not to vehemently criticise the conduct and existing faith of the people to obtain a swift victory over their lower nature.

The wise has been enjoined upon to act in the world with the same vehemence and zeal which guide the actions of a desire-promoted man. "The glow which accompanies the desire-promoted action of the worldly, the enthusiasm and zest of the youth, and the tireless energy of the ambitious, must all be preserved and transliterated into something higher, and not allowed to drain away into desert sands. The true *vairagi* is not a dull dried up holy person of the type that has made the very name of religion a thing of nausea to

so many of us, but a tireless fountain of joyful and inspired life based on the eternal Anand of the Brahman." (Geeta by Krishna Prem).

III-25 The Lord thus says that a wise man desiring to hold the people together on the Divine path, should perform actions with the same zeal with which an ignorant person performs his actions prompted by sense attachments.

III 26 A man of wisdom in union with God should not disturb the intellectual faith of an ignornat desire-driven person, but he should set them to all actions doing them himself in the best manner.

III—D (1) DETERMINISM OF NATURE. (III—27 to 32)

You say that the wise should not disturb the faith of another, and allow him to act according to his own nature. What is the rational import behind this advise ?

Geeta insists not to impose many donts or negative precepts to guide a man. It aims at transformation of nature in natural course, since at the present stage of evolution, a common man finds himself completely dominated by his lower nature which is the sole determinant of all his activities. If this torrential flow of nature is abruptly checked, there is a likelihood of a disastrous catastrophy. Forcible suppression of nature is therefore condemned, and stress has been laid on gradual regulation of sense activities by psychological disassociation from the relish of sense objects. Inspite of best efforts of high personages to change the average human mentality, we find the human nature obstinately clinging to to its old anchorage. In our own age we had a living example of a divine worker in Mahatma Gandhi, who fought a spiritual battle and succeeded in driving out a firmly entranched imperialistic power by the spiritual armoury of passive resistance and non-violent weapon. Many persons

were emotionally moved to follow his example, and suffered incarceration, sacrificed personal comforts and selfish interests. But after the impulse of motion subsided we find most of them devising ways and means for obtaining a handsome return in the shape of political power, monopolies or other sources of economic nature. Mahatma Gandhi had the backing of the inner voice of his higher nature, which these emotional followers lack, and consequently we find them returning to their old moorings.

Geeta speaks of two kinds of nature: Spiritual—Higher nature and lower natures of ego, mind and senses. An average man is controlled by the lower nature of his ego, and his higher self remains clouded by the lower ego-deluded self (Ahankar Vimoodha Atma), which virtually controls all his activities. This lower nature is repetitive and too obstinate for an easy change because it is dominated by its three inherent tendencies known as gunas. Satoguna is the characteristic of higher mind tending towards harmony, peace and happiness. *Rajoguna* is the characteristic of desire-body initiating desires, ambition, pride and other sense attraction. *Tamoguna* is the nature of physical body, a strong opponent of progress and evolution. An average man is driven to action prompted by the tendencies of his mental body, desire body and physical body, and finds himself under the complete domination of their triple tendencies or gunas. Instead of realising that the sole determinants of his actions is his nature of the three gunas he considers himself as a free actor under the delusion of his ego. But one who understands the intricate working of these principle elements of nature (Tatwa Vit) does not attribute any action to himself, and thereby creates no personal bondage. He, on the other hand, considers himself as an instrument to carry out the Divine will, and dedicates all his actions and their fruits to the Divine. This is the secret of transforming lower nature into higher nature to enable one to transgress the bondages of the laws of *karma* and rebirth. His ego-centric activity has to be replaced by the

activity of higher spiritual nature, and all actions have to be performed with spiritual consciousness (Adhyatma Chetasa), Arjun has been advised to dynamically tackle the struggle of life with such consciousness without being unnerved by mental or sense attachment

III 27 The Lord thus says that all actions are being worked out through the instrumentallity of the gunas of nature, but the ego deluded self (Ahankara Vimoodha Atma) believes himself to be the real actor

III 28 Those having knowledge of the inner psychological working of the gunas of nature (Tatwa Vit) realise that the entire activity is the result of action and reaction of gunas one upon another They are not thus deluded into a belief that they are the actors, and are thus liberated from the bondage of the law of *karma*

III 29 Those who are unaware of these intricate inner forces of action in whole, remain fastened and deluded by the uncontrolable drive of the gunas But the knowers of the whole process of action need not disturb the stand point of those who are not aware of it

III 30 The Lord says that you should dedicate all your actions to Me, remaining always in the consciousness of your higher self, free from attachment to actions or to any expectation of resulting fruit With this mental attitude vigorously fight out the battle of life devoid of mental nervousness (Vigat Jwarah)

III-31 Those persons who always follow this advice of mine with faith and without any dialectic hitch get liberated from bondages of action

III-32 Those doubting dialecticians deluded by confused intellectual knowledge, who do not guide their life's activities in accordance with this advice of mine, you should know such ignorant persons as doomed to destruction

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III—D (2) DETERMINISM OF NATURE AND FREEDOM ON ACTION (III—33 to 35)

From what has been said above, it appears that the gunas of nature are the real determinants of action and a man has no freedom or choice and has to work as an automatum under the drive of these gunas. If so, what chance is there for a man to mould his activity for further evolution and is there any possibility of his becoming a free agent in the guidance of his actions ?

This imperative law of determinism is the law of lower nature which holds good only in the lower three regions of existence in which it has its sovereignty. The higher spiritual region of the upper four planes is controlled by spiritual nature, in which gunas become inactive and harmonious. Law of determinism of Nature has its over-powering mastery and control over those who remain entangled in the lower nature of ego, mind and senses. But there is a way to get over this tangle of nature's determinism. A man is free to rise to the higher spiritual consciousness if he so wills, and to get over this Omnipotence of lower Nature. Lord Krishna therefore advises Arjun to rise to the higher self-consciousness (Adhyatma Chetsa), if he wants to liberate himself from this tyrannical law of lower nature.

Geeta does not advocate harsh, austere penances of Hathyoga to mortify and paralyse the very faculties of senses and mind to achieve this goal. It advises only a psychological change in the mental outlook in performance of action. Instead of directing his activities to gratify his senses, mind, and ego, a man is advised to cultivate the habit of directing and surrendering them to the very Lord of Existence, whose will is being executed by his subordinate lower Nature.

Shri Aurobindo says, "Here there is a clear distinction between two levels of consciousness, two standpoints of action, (1) that of the soul caught in the web of its egoistic

nature, and doing works with the idea but not the reality of free will, under the impulsion of Nature and (2) that of the soul delivered from its identification with the ego observing, sanctioning, and governing the works of Nature from above We speak of the soul being subject to Nature, but Geeta affirms that while Nature is the executrix, the soul is always the lord Ishwar It speaks of the self being bewildered by egoism, but the real Self is the Divine, eternally free and sel f aware What then is that self that is bewildered by Nature We are speaking of the apparent self, and not of the real self, not the true Purusha It is really the ego which is subject to nature, and when the self awareness identifies itself with the ego, it creates the appearance of a lower self, and ego self Thus there are, we may say, two souls in us, (1) the apparent or desire soul which changes with the notation of gunas, and is entirely constituted and determined by them, and (2) the free and eternal Purusha not limited by Nature and her Gunas We have two selves, (1) the apparent self, which is only the ego, which says, "I am this natural being who am doing these works", but this natural being is simply Nature, a composite of Gunas , and (2) the true Self which is indeed the upholder *the Lord of Nature* *The way to be free must* then be to get rid of the desires of this desire soul and the false self view of this ego"

If this apparent or lower self of man is completely enslaved by Nature, leaving no true will of his own to control it from further evolution, how will it be possible for a man to dedicate his actions to the Divine, in prefere nce to the demands of his ego, mind and senses ?

In answer to this question, the Lord first points out the overwhelming dominence of Nature's law of determinism before pointing out a way of liberation *from its tyrannical* sovereignty. The Lord says that undoubtedly this existence is being automatically *driven* in the torrential currents of Nature, and that it would be of no avail to prevent

its free flow by putting up an artificial dam, which might result in its overflooding the banks and causing a mental devastation.

III-33 The Lord says that even a wise man exerts himself in action according to the dictates of his nature All beings are being swept away by Nature Of what avail will its forcible coersion be.

III-34 Attraction and repulsion of senses remain ambushed in sense objects Do not come under the domination of these two, because they are the besetters of the soul in its path

III-35 One's own law of action emerging out of his nature (*swadharma*) even though devoid of merit (Viguna) is superior to another's law of action, appearing more honourable in its discharge. Better death in following one's own law of action, because imitation of another's law of action is perilous

These three verses read with verses 27 & 28 positively assert the Omnipotence of Nature and point out the tremendous power of the Gunas in dynamising the cosmic wheel of created existence. The creatures riding on this wheel are being mechanically rotated round and round, from birth to birth, leaving no free will of their own to extricate themselves from this all powerful Nature (XVIII-61) If this is the supreme law there can be no hope of man's redemption.

These verses only point out the existing dominance of Nature over those who are driven to action by the dictates of their ego, lower mind and senses The laws of nature operate in rigid fixity and inevitability like a machine with a determined result. Effect follows cause with unerring accuracy. Thus we find that determinism is the primary law of Nature. This is so because the entire existence is the "Self determination" of the Divine out of himself The world is in fact a pre-determined emanation and not a creation.

Thus the law of determinism is the very backbone of Nature, without which there could have been no movement or creation in this universe But at the same time, the Divine will being behind the universal existence, it has its own freedom of the Divine himself It is this free Divine will that is virtually the origin of the nature s law of determinism

In one of his letters Shri Aurobindo says that "Freedom is the reality, while Determinism of Nature is only a phenomenon Freedom and Determinism are only two sides or two phases of the same thing, for the fundamental truth is self-determination of the Cosmos, and in it a secret self-determination of the individual The difficulty arises from the fact that we live in the surface mind of Ignorance, do not know what is going on behind, and see only the phenomenal process of Nature. There the apparent fact is an overwhelming determinism of Nature, and as our surface consciousness is part of that process, we are unable to see the other term of the 'biune' reality (Freedom) For practical purposes on the surface there is an entire determinism in Matter"

In this world all inanimate nature, namely mineral, plant and even animal is solely governed by the nature's law of determinism, because they having no will of their own, are practically driven helplessly by that law of the Nature Man is the first creature who is equipped with mind and intellect sufficiently advanced to have the freedom of forming a will of his own, even in opposition to the Nature's will of Determinism. But such a free will is generally the will of his ego, mind and senses, and not the true free will of his Divine self. By execution of such a will of ego in his behaviour, he constitutes Natural impulses and tendencies of mental and sensual nature known as his *Swabhav* for guidance of his actions But he is also endowed with higher mind and intellect and has the capacity to utilise them to mould his pre-determined nature by controlling the

natural drive of his senses, and subordinating them to his higher mind and intellect, then to his self and thereby to liberate himself from the mechanical determinism of Nature.

Shri Aurobindo says that for practical purposes on the surface, there is entire determinism, but as life emerges, a certain plasticity sets in, so that it is difficult to predict anything exactly as one predicts material things that obey a rigid law. The plasticity increases with the growth of mind, so that man can have at least a sense of free will of a choice of his action of a self movement, which at least helps to determine circumstances. But this freedom is dubious, because it can be declared to be an illusion, a decree of Nature, part of its machinery of determinism, only a seeming freedom or at most a restricted, relative, and subject independence. It is only when one goes behind away from *Prakriti* to *Purusha*, and upward away from mind to spiritual self, that the side of freedom comes to be first evident, and then by unision with the Divine will, which is above Nature, it becomes complete".

Thus the Nature's law of Determinism or law of Causation has its validity only in the lower spheres of mind, senses and matter of the Triloki. Freedom of will is the law of the higher four spiritual planes. By transference of lower consciousness into spiritual consciousness, man can liberate himself from the tyranny of Nature's law of Determinism. Lord Shri Krishna therefore advises Arjun to develop Consciousness of his higher self (Adhyatma Chetasa), and to surrender all actions to the Lord of Nature.

III

Geeta advises Arjun to raise his lower consciousness into the consciousness of his higher self, but at the same time warns him in verse 35 to act strictly in accordance with the dictates of his nature without making any

attempt to imitate another's law of action. How do you reconcile this inconsistency ?

At the present stage of evolution humanity acts under the suzerainty of Nature's law of Determinism or Causation. How to get over this law of causation is the problem. There are only two alternatives before us (i) either to withdraw from the world and cease to do any action, or (ii) to continue to act in the world, but with a psychological change in the outlook. If we adopt the second alternative on which the Geeta lays great stress, action cannot suddenly change its old characteristic. We have therefore to start with the very same old nature which we have formed by past actions. This old habit cannot be transformed by imitation of another's nature. A *rajasic* or *tamasic* temperament cannot be suddenly changed into a *satwic* temperament by imitation. We have personal experience of many so-called public workers and religious preachers, who exploit simple credulous people to secure some personal end of their own in the garb of altruistic, communal, national or religious leaders. They may have the best of motives to start with, but their inherent nature helplessly drive them in its own orbit.

Geeta does not thus want you to become an ascetic but insists on the conduct of actions in the light of your own *swadharma* and *swakarma* The psychological view point that should govern and guide activity of the people of whatever nature is one and the same The key-points of this standpoint of action are (1) Non-attachment to fruit, (2) surrender of action to the Divine, (3) to realise one self as an instrument of Divine work, and to become a Divine worker, shedding off the usual egoistic outlook One can thus transform his lower nature into spiritual nature by starting his practice from whatever kind of inborn nature he possesses as a result of his past actions

III—D(3) PRACTICAL METHOD OF GETTING OVER THE NATURE'S LAW OF DETERMINISM (III—36 to 41)

So long as our lower nature persists, there is no escape from the law of determinism Then what it is that keeps us bound to this law, and how are we going to escape from its clutches to evolve this lower nature into the spiritual nature Arjun puts this very pertinent problem before Lord Krishna saying ·

III-36. What is that propelling force in us that drives a man to sinful acts as if by force, even against his struggling Will ?

This multiple existence is a manifestation of Sachchidananda Brahman, wrought out by his primal Nature (*Moola Prakrity*). His Sat aspect manifests as matter, and Chit aspect as Self Consciousness This conscious Self involved in matter struggles out to exhibit His inherent Bliss, but at each step He has to face dark adverse forces obstructing its free enjoyment All created beings right from mineral, plant, animal to man are busy clearing out obstacles in their path for attainment of a peaceful and a blissful happy life Life is virtually a perpetual striving after the eclipsed Bliss, which evades grasp like a mirage All efforts for permanent joy prove abortive like a race after El Dorado, because every rose is experienced to have a thorn Desire is accompanied by wrath, pleasure by pain, attraction by repulsion, love by hate and so on What is the way to remove these thorns in order to make this world a happy place for habitation One way is to withdraw from the world and from all its activities But this is undoubtedly a remedy which abolishes the disease along with the patient Geeta therefore discourages it as an undesirable remedy

The other alternative remedy is to analyse the causes that produce these thorns, and to uproot them It is a common experience that like attracts like and repells unlike Similar temperaments are drawn towards each other, and develop

natural affinity, friendship, sympathy, love, and a happy combination This process of attraction and repulsion is prominently noticed even in the behaviours of chemicals, plants and animals resulting in group formations, and it appears to be a cardinal law of Nature Geeta thus broadly hints in Ch III Verse 34 that attraction and repulsion of senses remain ambushed in sense-objects, and that one should take care not to be dominated by them, as they are the main obstacles in the path of a search for happiness.

Geeta further points out how this instinct of desire builds up strong fortresses in the centres of senses, mind and intellect of a man and dominates his activities in life

III-37. The Lord says, "It is this desire and its companion wrath born of Rajas, which is all-devouring, ever insatiable, and all-poluting, that you should know as the great enemy of your soul

It must be noted that this denunciation and inhibition is confined particularly to Rajasic selfish desires and not to the desires of Satwic uplifting and evolutionary nature. We know how Rajasic desires lead a man to beastly crimes and to moral and intellectual bankruptcy

III 38 As fire is enveloped by smoke, a mirror by dust, an embryo by *amnion so the self gets enveloped by* Rajasic desires

III 39 Wisdom and reason get enveloped by this desire, which insatiable like fire, and a constant enemy of the wise

III-40 Senses, mind, and intellect are said to be the secret strongholds of the Rajasic desires, which bewilder and delude an embodied soul through them by clouding his Reason.

III 41 Therefore controlling the senses first of all, slay this greatest sinner, destructive of Reason and wisdom

These verses point out the psychological approach for uplifting lower nature to "Naish Karma" status, where

actions not only cease to create bondage, but also become a medium for development of spiritual consciousness. The sting of action does not lie in the outer form of activity, but in the motive that drives it, or in the relish that accompanies the Rajasic desires. This relish of desire for sense objects (Rag) fastens itself not only to senses but also to mind and intellect. In order to remove this sting it becomes necessary to launch an attack on its secret resorts.

III—D(4) PURUSARTHA TO CONTROL THE SENSES (III 42 &43)

Please point out some practical method to control the senses, mind and intellect.

Geeta enjoins upon us to first of all wage a war against the Rajasic desires securely entrenched in their fortresses of senses, mind and buddhi. Experience shows that senses are too subtle and indomitable to yield to any amount of coersive ascetic discipline. The organs of senses in the body may be atrophied by inanition or other practice but the relish of sense objects continues to remain as powerful as before. Mental discipline may bring the senses round, but the mind itself has already been besieged and enslaved by desires. Mental control, therefore, proves still more difficult unless rightly influenced by intellect and reason. But intellect and reason like mind are also the strongholds of desire. They are therefore in the habit of finding out ingenious devices and other intellectual contrivances to satisfy those desires. Personal efforts to control senses, mind, and intellect thus prove of no avail, because they are the secret fortresses of the enemy working within us as spies. These instruments of nature are more loyal to the three gunas to which they owe their existence, than to the Lord of Nature, the True Self within. The only approach left open to us for redress is to appeal to the self within which is the Lord of Nature. This is the idea behind the mythological description of the wars

between Devas and Asuras and the inability of the Devas to face the Asuras without approaching Lord Vishnu for help

Thus the remedy suggested by the Geeta to root out the secret cause of our degeneration is to discover our inner self and to leave the ego mind, intellect and senses to be dealt with by him, instead of our waging a war directly against these invulnerable fortresses

III 42. The Lord says that senses are said to be too subtle and indomitable for control, subtler than the senses is *mind*, and *subtler than mind is the reason* Higher than these is the self, their over lord

III-43 Therefore realising the self which is higher than intellect, and controlling lower self of ego by the consciousness of that higher Self, slay this invincible enemy *in the garb of desires*

Great stress is laid by Geeta and Upanishads on the awakening of Self consciousness It is only when one develops self consciousness that the knot of ego begins to dissolve and the separative consciousness of mind and senses begins to universalise So long as a man ramains a slave to this ego, mind, and senses, his will for action is determined by them Freedom of will and action is thus an illusion to him for all practical purposes He may boast of having a free will which is in fact a desire or ego-will We have to liberate ourselves from the suzerainty of lower nature into that of the spiritual nature of our higher Self

Law of action has retrospective and prospective character generally known as *Prarabdha* and *Purushartha* Action prompted by one's inborn nature constituted as a result of past *karmas* owes its natural impulse to the retrospective character (*Prarabdha*), which is subject to the law of Determinism of Nature. An action performed for evolution into higher spiritual nature is propelled as a result of the prospective trend of action called Purushartha The word 'Purushartha" literally means "In the interest of" or "For

the sake of" Purusha, the Self, and not in the interest of lower nature An activity for satisfaction of egoistic, mental and sense desires is not Purushartha It is by the actions of Purushartha that a man liberates himself from the slavery of desires, the enemy No 1 of man

An average man though practically acting and living under the drive of impulses of his inborn nature, guided and controlled by the predetermined law of nature constituted by past actions (*Prarabdha*) , yet being endowed with mind and intellect he is not absolutely hide-bound by the mechanical groove of *Prarabdha* He has freedom to choose and guide the nature of his actions if he so wills to lead his life on the evolutionary divine path, and to counteract the drive of his inborn nature A free exercise of this freedom to unveil the super-conscient level of higher mind, Vigyan and Self consciousness is the true Purushartha, on which Geeta has laid stress in the concluding verses of this chapter Karma-yoga of Geeta thus advocates development of Purushartha to counteract the downward pull of the predetermined law of Prarabdha

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Thus comes to an end Chapter Three styled as "KARMA YOGA"

CHAPTER IV

KNOWLEDGE AND TRUE RENUNCIATION OF ACTION

IV A (1) KARMA YOGA IS AN ETERNAL DIVINE LAW (IV—1 to 3)

The subtle intricate philosophy of Karma Yoga enunciated by Lord Shri Krishna did not give a satisfactory solution to Arjun's mental tussle of a choice between action and inaction (*Sannyasa*) He already had a theory of his own based on the then current Sankhya philosophy in favour of Inaction, and it was not easy to draw him out of that mental groove According to Sankhya, Purusha is inactive, but the light of consciousness, while Prakriti is a mechanical blind energy working by the inequality of her three gunas in perpetual collision, intermixture, and mutation with each other By means of her ego principle she gets the Purusha to identify himself with its working. When the Purusha ceases to enjoy and witness the charming dance of Prakriti by total withdrawal from the world and its activities, he gets liberated from her bondage Sankhya thus accepts two independent principles namely *Purusha* and *Prakriti*.

Geeta accepts that Purusha is the conscious Being but inactive, and that Prakriti is the sole actor but not mechanical or blind Though Purusha is not the actor, but he is the Lord of Prakriti, and not a helpless witness He has the power to bring Prakriti under control by development of Self consciousness Geeta thus lays stress on action guided by Self consciousness, while Sankhya advocates inaction or Sannyasa Arjun did not seem to be convinced by the principles of *Karmayoga* in preference to his preconcieved theory of Inaction Lord Shri Krishna could see through this tussle of Arjun's mind, and anticipating his doubts he assures him that the principle of Karma yoga is not a new

concept, but that it is an eternal law of existence, not a man-made law, but a law laid down and continued by the Divine himself from age to age. It is for this reason that the question of *Avatar* has cropped up in the discourse as a relevant arguement though it might seem to a superficial reader as out of place, a later interpolation.

Was this theory of Karma Yoga ever practised before and found successfull ?

IV-1. The Lord says that this eternal law of karma yoga had been told by me to Vivaswan, who taught it to Manu. and Manu in turn taught it to Ikshwaku.

IV-2. This knowledge descending down from generation to generation was known by King Sages. O Arjun ! it is now eclipsed by lapse of time.

IV-3. Now the same ancient yoga, this supreme secret has been disclosed by me to you, because you are not only my friend but also my devotee.

Who are these personages who followed this yoga of Action with success, and how could you have been present in that hoary past to disclose this yoga to Vivaswan ?

Naturally a question arises in the mind of any rationalist as to who these ancient personages were, to whom this yoga was disclosed in hoary past, and how was it possible for Arjun's teacher Lord Krishna to have been in existence to preach this yoga to them. The latter question has already been put by Arjun and properly answered. The first question remains a mystery unless we un-hesitatingly believe the historicity of the existence of those persons.

The Cosmic Karma which created this existence is the Divine Law of Action. It is said to be eternal and imperishable, and it must be deemed to have been the law of action which resulted in the creation of this existence. The first created being, is the Logas of our world, or the sun,

the Aditya (Adi+iti) also known as Vivaswan He followed this eternal law of cosmic action and created this world as a Divine Architect In course of involuntary progress of creation, there came into being the cosmic mental plane ruled by the king Manu He also literally followed Cosmic law of Karma involving Cosmic Yagna Activity for Divine fulfillment in the creation Later on came in existence the Cosmic Desire Plane ruled by the King Ikshaku (A desire Personality) who also followed the Cosmic Law of Action Thereafter came in existence the physical plane of plant animal, and man kingdoms The ancient rulers of these kingdoms were also guided by this Cosmic Law, which contributed to the evolution of life and mind without any individual effort on the part of creature It was only when man developed mental and vital powers for satisfaction of his selfish egoistic desires, that this natural law of cosmic action came in conflict with the separative personal law, and gradually got eclipsed and almost disappeared by flux of time It was only to revive this ancient imperishable law of Cosmic Action (Dharma), that Lord Shri Krishna took birth in order to dispel the impediments against its revival (Adharma)

Why did Shri Krishna choose Arjun for imparting this knowledge, and not Yudhisthira ?

Yudhisthira was already a wise man and knew this law Arjuna was prominently a man of action and was a suitable person for being taught the secret of cosmic action in contrast to separative personal action Inspite of greatest reverence that Arjun had for Lord Krishna, he still regarded him as a friend, relation and equal. On critical occasions he was not inclined to accept the advice of Lord Krishna as an infallible guide In order to bring home his teachings to Arjun's vacillating mind, Lord Krishna had to introduce the question of Avatar hood as an authority for the truth of what he was teaching

IV-A (2)—POSSIBILITY OF DIVINE INCARNATION OR AVATAR (IV—5 to 8)

Arjun is curious to know as to how it was possible for Lord Krishna to impart the knowledge of Karma yoga to Vivaswan in the beginning of the creation He thus puts a direct question to him on the point

You have taken birth now in this age, whereas Vivaswan was born in distant past. How am I to believe that you disclosed this yoga to him in the beginning of creation ?

In order to strongly impress his teaching on Arjun, Lord Krishna emphasises that he is not an ordinary mortal like him (Arjun), but that he was God incarnate, and that it was He Himself who had descended from age to age as an Avatar to impart the knowledge of the law of Cosmic Action to these ancient sages.

IV-5. The Lord says, O Arjun ! I and you have gone through many births in the past I recollect all of them, but not you, O Parantap !

If you are the Divine your-self, how and why do you take birth like an ordinary mortal ?

IV-6. The Lord says that though I am unborn and Imperishable Cosmic Self, though I am the Lord of all existences, yet establishing suzerainty over my Cosmic Nature, I come into birth by means of my own self-maya

IV-7. Whenever there is a fading of the Cosmic Law of Action (Dharma), and the upsurge of unrighteousness, then I lose forth My Self into birth.

IV-8. For the deliverance of the good and virtuous, for the uprooting of the evil-doers, for establishing the Divine law of Action in the creation, I am born from age to age.

The idea of Divine himself taking birth in human or other forms is the deep-rooted conviction of some Indian systems of Philosophy. There are other systems too which felt the necessity of a belief in the descent of divine agents, though

the Aditya (Adi+iti) also known as Vivaswan He followed this eternal law of cosmic action and created this world as a Divine Architect In course of involuntary progress of creation, there came into being the cosmic mental plane ruled by the king Manu He also literally followed Cosmic law of Karma involving Cosmic Yagna Activity for Divine fulfillment in the creation Later on came in existence the Cosmic Desire Plane ruled by the King Ikshaku (A desire Personality) who also followed the Cosmic Law of Action Thereafter came in existence the physical plane of plant animal, and man kingdoms The ancient rulers of these kingdoms were also guided by this Cosmic Law, which contributed to the evolution of life and mind without any individual effort on the part of creature It was only when man developed mental and vital powers for satisfaction of his selfish egoistic desires, that this natural law of cosmic action came in conflict with the separative personal law, and gradually got eclipsed and almost disappeared by flux of time It was only to revive this ancient imperishable law of Cosmic Action (Dharma), that Lord Shri Krishna took birth in order to dispel the impediments against its revival (Adharma)

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not of the Divine himself for uplift of the humanity, and named them as a messenger or the Son of God To the modern mind, Avatara hood is one of the most difficult conceptions to accept, out of all the ideas that are streaming in from the East upon the rationalised human consciousness. The rationalist objects that if God exists, He is extra Cosmic or Super Cosmic and does not intervene in the affairs of the world, but that He allows them to be governed by a fixed machinery of Nature He is pure Spirit, and cannot put on a body , Infinite cannot be finite as a human-being as finite and the ever unborn Creator cannot be the creature born into the world These objections appear to have been anticipated by the Lord, as he himself makes a mention of them, saying that although He is unborn, imperishable, the Lord of all beings, yet he assumes birth

Geeta meets all these objections by the established Vedantic View that all that exists is nothing but the Brahman himself Brahman is both the One and the Many In manifestation, the "Many" aspect gains predominance, and there comes into being the terrestrial existence of multiple-beings Each individual is virtually the Divine Self in a microcosmic form, possessing all the Divine potentialities This spiritual microcosm masquerades himself in the external forms of mind, desire and matter, and moves incognito in the world like an actor on a stage, playing the parts of a king, buffoon or villain without being recognised This is the nature's creative process of transfiguring the True Self into assumed personalities and thereby creating a delusion popularly known as Maya (Ma=not , Ya=this, i e not this). All creatures owe their existence to this illusive Divine Power, which creates Many Out Of The One

This is one process of Divine descent by involution in nature in the microcosmic forms of the Many, though retaining the entire divine potentialities This is the very idea beautifully expressed in the Upanishads that the whole divided or subtracted from the whole, still remains the

Whole. This is whole, That is whole, whole evolves from whole, whole taken from *whole, remains whole. The Jeevaatma* of an *individual being virtually* the whole as a microcosm, gradually evolves out all, the divine possibilities, and in the long run fulfills in himself the entire divinity, and becomes one with the Divine Consciousness, Divine Action, and Divine Bliss. He fulfills in himself the one aspect as well as the Many-Aspect of the Divine.

There is also another process of Divine descent in human and other forms, not as a microcosm but as the Central Being of the Cosmic Macrocosm. But this *Divine* birth has to pass through *the medium of the Nature's transfiguring process of creation (Maya),* as *it* is the very gate through which the "Many" aspect can come into being (Sambhawami Atma Mayaya). Such Divine birth is known as Avatar. Lord Shri Krishna speaks of his many divine births from age to age, The one aspect of the Divine is a static condition and cannot take birth. It is only the dynamic Saguna aspect of the Divine that takes birth in human form through the normal Channel of Maya.

There is a difference in the processes of Divine birth and human birth. In the Divine birth the spirit incarnates with complete mastery over Nature (Prakriti Swam *Adhishtim)* while in human birth, the spirit incarnates enveloped in Nature (Prakritim Swam Adhishtaya), under its domination. Human incarnate has to work under the control of Nature, while the Divine incarnate has freedom of will and action. The former is driven helplessly under the mechanism of Nature while the Avatara works as the Lord of Nature, full of Light and Wisdom. Avatar is the manifestation from above of that to which we have to develop from below. It is the descent of God into that Divine birth in human form, into which mortal creatures have to climb. It is the attracting Divine example given by God to man, in the very type and form and perfected model of our human existence. Avatar represents the Divine in this mortal world, through whose intervention it becomes possible for mortal beings to

secure entry into the spiritual world. The first process is the Divine descent as Man-God (Nara) in order to transform him into God-Man (Narayana). The second is the descent of Narayana himself in human form as God-Man.

IV-A (3) PURPOSE OF AVATARA—HOOD-ASCENT OF MAN INTO DIVINE BIRTH (IV-9 to 10)

The Divine is Omnipotent, then why does He himself descend as an Avatara for the revival of the cosmic Law of Action instead of getting that work done by Man himself ?

Avatara is the descent of the Divine for two purposes : (1) to restore the working of the Divine law of Cosmic Action, and (2) to remove obstacle in the progress of evolution and to revive the Dharma. Man has reached the present stage of mental development after passing through several lower mental stages of a cave man, ferocious animal man (Rakshas) and egoistic lower mental man. When each stage reached its culmination, there was a general crisis which was beyond the power of an ordinary man to control. Descent of supernatural power then becomes necessary to introduce a higher law by removing the obstacles that come in its way. Narasinha Avatara came to destroy the pure beastly rakshas nature of humanity represented by Hiranya Kashyap and to introduce higher mental principles in his son Prahlad. Parasuram eliminated the highly developed ego principle of kings to prepare the ground for the descent of spiritual principles in the humanity by Rama by eliminating the remnant of beast nature.

Shri Aurobindo says in one of his letters that Avatarahood would have little meaning if it were not connected with the evolution. The Hindoo procession of the ten Avataras is itself, as it were, a parable of evolution. First the Fish Avatara (To evolve the sentient life in matter), then the amphibious animal between land and water (Kaachha, to evolve animal life consciousness), then the land animal

(Baraha, to evolve still higher animal life), the animal-man of brute nature (Narasimha), then man as dwarf, small, undeveloped, (Vaman, to evolve mental consciousness *in* man), *then Parasurama to suppress the egoistic nature, then* Rama to evolve *higher mental and social and spiritual* nature, *and then Krishna to evolve supramental pull in humanity by developing Divine Love and Divine Wisdom in* all round *activities.*

The question *still* remains unsolved as to why the *Divine* has to descend himself as an Avatara for evolving higher levels of consciousness on the earth ? Our existence is said to consist of seven cosmic planes. These planes are in-fact various levels of cosmic consciousnesses as shown below :

Physical Plane—Inconscience of mineral (Involved Consciousness).
Desire Plane—Life Consciousness of Vital nature of *desire.*
Mental Plane—Sub-consious mental consciousness.
Lower mental consciousness.
Higher mental consciousness.
Intuitional mental consciousness.
Inspired mental conscsiouness.
Revellatory mental consciousness
Over-mind consciousness.
Buddhic Plane—Supra-mental consciousness, Pragya
Spiritual Planes—(of Sat, tap, and Jana) – Spiritual consciousness.

These cosmic consciousnesses gradually descend down on earth to enable the created beings to imbibe and develop them in their nature to fulfill the Divine Plan. Up to the present stage of evolution. Life consciousness, Vital desire consciousness, Lower mental consciousness, and a Sprinkling of higher mental consciousness have descended down in humanity. Descent of higher levels of mind, supermind and of spiritual consciousness is still awaited. Descent of these cosmic consciousnesses on the earth for progress of man's

evolutions is beyond the capacity of a man of any amount of advancement to accomplish. To bring down the descent of these cosmic levels it becomes inevitable for a cosmic Divine power to descend as an Avatara. Thus for introduction of a new higher consciousness in existence, the Divine decent becomes inevitable. Such descent is literally expressed by the term Avatara Shri Aurobindo has by his tapasya succeeded in bringing about the descent of supra mental consciousness to touch the fringe of earth consciousness, which in course of time may result in the development of a new Race of man kind on earth, and in evolving the long dreamt of 'Millennium'' of universal love, unity, joy and peace

Shri Aurobindo says that the Avatata is one who comes to open the way for humanity to a higher consciousness The manifestation of the Divine in the Avatara is of help to man because it helps him to discover his own divinity and find the way to realise it In his Essays on Geeta he says that there are two aspects of Divine birth, one is a descent, the birth of God in humanity, the God-head manifesting himself in human form and nature (Avatara) , the other is an ascent, the birth of a man into the God-head, man rising into the Divine Nature and consciousness (Madbhavam Agatah) It is the being born a new in a second birth of the soul It is that new birth which is Avatara hood, and the upholding of the dharma are intended to serve. If this were not the raising of man into God head to be helped by the descent of God in humanity, Avatarahood for the sake of Dharma (only) would be an otiose phenomenon, since mere right, mere justice, or standards of virtue can always be upheld by Divine Omnipotence, through its ordinary means by great man or great movements by the life and work of sages, kings, and religious teachers without any actual incarnation

The Avatara comes as the manifestation of Divine Nature in the human nature, as Christ, Buddha, Krishna, in order that human nature, may by moulding its principles,

thought, feeling, and action on the lines of Christ-hood, Krishna-hood, or Buddha-hood, transfigure itself into the Divine. The law, the Dharma which he establishes is given for this purpose chiefly. The Christ, Krishna, Buddha stands in the Centre as the gate—"The way man shall follow." This purpose of the Divine Avatara of raising a man into God-head is made more specific in the next verse.

IV-9 The Lord says, O Arjun ! One who has knowledge of the essential principles of my drivine birth and divine karma, does not come to re-birth after leaving his body, but comes to Me.

IV-A (4)—MAN'S EFFORTS TO DESERVE THE GRACE OF THE AVATARA. (IV—10)

If the main purpose of the Divine incarnation is to transform human conscionsness into God consciousness, what should a man do to deserve full advantage of the Avatara ?

Unless there is an ascent from below by purification of lower nature, one cannot expect the descent of Divine Consciousness in him from above. He has to develop certain qualifications in his nature to deserve such descent.

IV-10 The Lord says, "Delivered from relish, fear, and anger, with mind absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, many persons purifying themselves in the fire of Divine Wisdom, have attained consciousness of my being (Mad-bhavam Agatah).

The qualification required for the Divine descent in human consciousness as given in verses 9 & 10 are enumerated as follows :

(1) Knowledge of the essential principles leading to Divine birth (Divya janma).

(2) Knowledge of the essential *principles (Tatwataha)*, leading to *Divine Works.*

(3) Deliverance from the agitation caused by attraction and repulsion of sense objects (Rag), fear, and anger.

(4) Absorption of mind in the Divine (Man-maya).

(5) Surrender to the Divine of the entire being (Mam-upashrita).

(6) Self purification by Divine Wisdom (Gyan tapsa puta).

In the absence of these qualifications, mere repeated reading about the birth and actions of Lord Krishna in Bhagvat or Maha-Bharat should not be expected to enable a man to cross death, or to attain Divine Consciousness. Divine birth is the descent of God-head into humanity to demonstrate how a man can live and act in the world free from the mechanism of lower nature. We must have full faith in the Avatara's. Avatara's mission of aiding our evolution, and it becomes our sacred duty to co-operate in his plan and satisfy the conditions requisite to deserve His Grace. The Avatara is in fact ever intent upon and on the look out to help man in spiritual ascent in order to fulfil HIs mission. He takes complete charge of his true devotee, looks after his worldly and spiritual welfare (Yoga Kshemum Bahamiham), and helps him directly or indirectly in eliminating all obstructions and difficulties in his Divine path The Avatara becomes his true friend, philosopher and guide, and it remains the chief object of his mission to accept his devotee in close union and embrace. But the descent of such Grace varies in proportion to the devotee's own aspirations, efforts, and sincerity to attain it.

IV-11. Thus the Lord says that in proportion as one propitiates Me, I propitiate him in equal measure. All men are in fact constantly treading the divine path.

What do you mean by saying that all men are treading the Divine Path ?

Evolution is the divine law of Nature. The entire created existence is being perforced evolved out by Nature's

process. Spirit, involved in matter has struggled out to evolve life in plant, animal and mind in man sherely by the stress of Universal Nature and not by any personal efforts. The Avatara comes to give a special stress to this evolutionary process of Nature. The man being gifted with mind and intelligence has the option to avail of the aid of Avatara for his further evolution. The extent of the intensity of his love, surrender, and aspiration determines the extent of the grace of the avatara to help him. But if he fails to avail of this advantage and obstruct the process of Nature by mis-use of senses, mind and intellect for satisfaction of his egoistic desires, Nature, will in its ordinary slow course uplift him after many pitfalls in distant future, because he is willy-nilly consciously or unconsciously treading the Divine Path under the stress of Nature's evolutionary process.

IV-B (1) – DIVINE WORKS—(IV-12 to 24)

Why is a man inclined to approach nature gods instead of directly approaching the divine Avatara ?

At the present stage of evolution all activities of a man are actuated by the predominant quality of his inborn nature. Human nature can be divided in four distinct categories depending on the predominance of one or the other of the three gunas. The predominant guna of an individual constitutes his inborn nature (Swabhava) which determines his natural tendency for action. As already described in the previous chapter Satoguna creates a natural tendency for harmony, peace and wisdom. Rajoguna develops a tendency of activity, devising and manipulating ways and means for satisfaction of egoistic desires. Tamoguna creates a downward pull of inertia, confusion, dependence and of evil and cruel propensitities. The proportion of these gunas varies from man to man and we find four broad categories of human nature

(1) A man of sato rajas temperament tending towards Brahman karma.

(2) A man of rajo-satwic temperament tending towards Kshatra Karma.

(3) A man of rajo-tamasic temperament tending towards Vaishya Karma.

(4) A man of tamo-rajasic temperament tending towards Sudra Karma.

These categories of human nature and action owe their existence to the diverse permutations and combinations of the gunas and their natural tendencies in action (Guna-karma vibhagshah). A man of sato-rajo guna temperament feels a natural attraction to adore the divine Avatara. But a man of Kshatra and Vaishya termperament Intent upon immediate satisfaction of personal desires feels inclined to approach the Nature gods for immediate result. A man of Sudra temperament approaches ghosts and nature spirits to ward off an evil.

IV-12 The Lord thus says that those persons who desire success of their desire-driven actions worship the devas. In this world of man immediate success is obtained as a result of such action.

IV 13 The fourfold categories of human nat re are created by me according to the diverse distribution of gunas and their characteristic activities. Know me as their author, but yet the imperishable non-doer.

The divine Avatara lives and acts with the spritual trigunatit nature and is not bound by these gunas or their resultant actions Therefore, one who aspires and adores the divins Avatara gets released from the bondage of actions

IV-14 The Lord thus says that the actions have neither any attachment for Me (Avatara), nor have I any attachment for the fruits of actions. He who knows Me thus gets relieved from the bondage of actions.

IV-15 With this knowledge of the secret of divine action, works have been performed in the past by seekers of

moksha or liberation in divine consciousness. Therefore, you should perform actions with the same mental outlook with which actions were performed in the past by your ancestors.

In order to obtain release from the bondage of actions, the Lord àdvises Arjun to follow his method of doing cosmic actions free from attachment to fruits, as it was the very method which his ancestors had followed in the past. The stress is on the adoration of the Avatara and not of the Nature gods, who work under the trigunatmic conditions for satisfaction of personal desire of their devotees. The worshipper of the Avatara works under the Divine example free from the downward pull of the Gunas.

IV—B(2) ACTION, INACTION, AND MALAFIDE ACTION

A man living as he does on the mental level, works under the domination of Gunas, and is unable to decide what the Divine action should be. His choice remains confused, and he finds only three alternatives, (i) either to act, or (ii) to abstain from action, or (iii) to do an evil action if it suits his purpose. Please enlighten me as to what should be the proper line of acion which would conform to the Divine Action ?

Geeta does not prescribe any particular form or type of action for a Divine Worker. He is on the other hand advised to live and act in the world like an ordinary man. There is no outward stamp in his action, by which he may be identified as a Divine Worker. He is confronted with the same problems in making a choice for action, which an ordinary man has to face. The difference lies only in the change of his outlook, which enables him to make inmediately a correct decision of a right choice A desire-driven person on account of his attachment to fruit has a vascillating confused mind, which presents an insoluble problem for making a choice particularly in a tense critical situation.

Geeta admits this difficulty of an ordinary man in making

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IV—B(3) HOW TO VISUALISE INACTION IN ACTION (IV—19 to 23)

Will you please illustrate Actions which amount to Inaction ?

Realisation of Inaction in Action virtually means development of that psychological standpoint with which one can continue to perform all necessary actions without creating a bondage of sin or virtue. An action is discarded and Inaction is preferred by a Sanyasi, because of its sting in creating a bondage. The skill of action lies in tact with which it can be performed with full immunity from its sting of bondage. This psychological tact of performance of action is illustrated in Verses 19 to 23 as enumerated below :

(1) Freedom from desire—Will

A liberated man is not afraid of action. He is an intensive Universal doer of all works as a mere channel of cosmic action. His actions create no bondage and to act in this liberating knowledge is the true sign of a Divine worker.

The Lord says :

IV-19 Whose initiations (Samarambha) of actions do not originate from a will of desire, who has burnt up the bondage of action in the fire of Divine Wisdom, him the wise have called a sage ......This is Inaction in Action.

(2) Indifference to fruit of action.

IV-20 One who has abandoned attachment to the fruit of action, who is always content, and seeks no dependence on anything, is virtually doing nothing, although intently indulged in doing every action.

This is Inaction in action.

(3) Treating body as passive channel of Divine Work.

IV-21 He who has no egoistic ambitions, who has controlled his lower self-consciousness, who does not seize on

choice of the line of action. It lays stress on the knowledge of these three alternatives, and suggests some key points to enable a man to drive at a correct choice, after a proper understanding of the principles leading to a such correct and true action.

IV-16 The Lord says—What is action, and what is Inaction, as to this even the sages get perplexed and deluded. I will declare to you that line of action by the knowledge of which, you shall be released from all ills.

IV-17 One has to know what true action is, as well as to know what wrong action is. He must also know what true Inaction is. Thick and tangled is the path of action.

All actions whether good or bad create bondage, and therefore, is it not advisable to completely withdraw from action and avoid its bondage, instead of puzzling one's brain to get over the riddle of the tangled path of action ?

How to evade the bondage of action is the crux of the entire riddle of an actor. Geeta does not advocate withdrawal from action or retirement from the world to avoid its resulting bondage. The same object can be achieved if one acts without attachment to fruits or to action itself. Inaction does not broadly mean cessation of action, but it includes performance of all actions, but without any expectation or attachment to fruit. An action performed with this angle of vision creates no bondage. It is thus that one can visualise Inaction in all actions, and it is such a kind of action that amounts to true Inaction (Sanyas) and not withdrawal from the world. Such Inaction (Tyag) is the golden rule which the wisest of men and the true Universal workers follow in the conduct of their life in this world.

IV-18 The Lord thus says that one who visualises Inaction in all his action, and considers such Inaction as his true action (he) is the wisest of men, a Universal worker and a true Karma Yogi.

Offering (Hutta) is the Divine himself in man ; the action the work, the sacrifice, is itself the Divine in movement, in activity, the god to be realised by sacrifice is the Divine.

The Geeta gives a description of the mental outlook of a Divine Worker in the figurative language of the material Yagna rituals.

IV-24. The Lord says that the Brahman Status is the ultimate attainment of one who has established himself in Divine Works (Brahman Karma Samadhina) realising that the consecrated energy of self-application in the act (Arpan) is the Brahman Energy, that the material employed in execution of the act is the Brahman material (Havi), that the objective of action in attainment of which this Brahman Energy and Brahman material are poured (Agni) is itself the Brahman fire, and that the sacrificer (Hota) is the Brahma himself.

There are four elements that go to constitute an action. The first element (Arpan) consists of mental preparation and will to offer one's mind, body and material possessions (Tan, Man and Dhan) in order to score success in a contemplated action. Second element (Havi) is the actual application of mental, physical and material energy in execution of the action. Third element (Agni) is the cause or object to which the action is directed by sacrifice of the said Havi. Fourth element (Hota) is the capacity of the actor who undertakes to perform the action. A man of wisdom believes that it is the one Divine who manifests in the doer, in the deed, in the object of the work and in the will of the Divine worker. He therefore feels that all these essentials of Divine works are propelled in him by the cosmic Brahma himself. The Divine worker thus sacrifices the Divine material, in the Divine fire by the Divine will in performance of Divine yagna. His ultimate attainment by such selfless action is the unitary Brahman Consciousness. He transforms his ego-personality into Divine-personality, merges his egoistic dynamism into cosmic dynamism (Yagna), and realises Divine Omnipresence

-things as personal possessions, and who treats his physical body as a mere channel of Cosmic action, such a sage creates no bondage of sin even while doing all actions.

This is Inaction in action.

(4) **Development of equal vision.**

IV-22 He who is satisfied with whatever gain comes to him, who has passed beyond dualities, who is jealous of none, and is harmonised both in failure or success, such a sage does not create bondage of action even though performing all actions.

This is Inaction in Action,

(5) **Transformation into a Divine Worker:**

By following the guiding principles of action as laid down in Verses 19 to 22, one becomes a Divine Worker, more sincere and dynamic than desire-driven worker.

IV-23. The Lord says: Freed from attachment, liberated from lower nature having attained supramental Wisdom, doing Universal actions of the Cosmic Divine Yagna, one dissolves all bondages of his actions.

Will not this attitude of Inaction in Action result in indifference to the world, and in a cessation of the peformance of one's duties towards his family, country and the world ?

A man who visualises Inaction in Action is a genuine sincere worker for the welfare of his family, country and the world, and more dynamic and sincere than an ordinary egoistic desire driven person. Shri Aurovindo says that a Divine Worker realises that the entire existence and its activity is nothing else than the Cosmic Divine Action. It is the Divine who manifests through an individual as the doer, the deed, and the object of works. The Universal Energy in which action is poured (Agni) is the Divine, the consecrated energy of the giving (Arpan) is the Divine, whatever is offerred (Havi) is some form of the Divine, the giver of the

Those who follow after the sacrifice of the gods conceive of the Divine in various forms and powers, and seek him by various means, rituals and dharmas. But those who have the knowledge, offer their sacrifice to the Divine himself by casting all their activities into the unified Divine Consciousness and Energy, and this is their one means and sole Dharma.

(3) Sense Yagna.

IV-26. Some sacrifice their senses of hearing etc. into the fire of sense control. Others sacrifice and inhibit sense-objects into the Sense-fire.

The first class of trainees (Sadhaks) follow the psychological discipline of sense control even in the midst of contacts with sense objects. The second class attempts to control the senses by physically withdrawing them from coming in contact with sense objects by withdrawing from the world and its activities.

(4) Sense and Life Yagna.

IV-27. Others sacrifice their sense and life functions into the wisdom-kindled fire of union with Higher Self attained by control of lower self.

Those who have attained self-realisation by control of mind and senses dedicate all activities of their life and senses to their higher self-consciousness instead of directing them to ego and mental consciousness.

IV-28. Other aspirants follow after material yagya (Dravya yagya), Tapa yagya, Yogya, yagya Gyana yagya, striving after them with austere determination.

(5) Dravya yagya.

This is a material objective sacrifice of money for public charitable institutions, or sacrifice of grain, clothings and other necessities of life to relieve the sufferings and needs of the helpless and poor.

and Divine Omnipotence in every object and activity of the world. This is how a Divine worker ascends into Divine Birth, and becomes a Dwij. *This is the underlying secrect* of Divine Karma which the Lord Krishna discloses when He says in Verse 9 that one who knows in essence the principle leading to Divine Birth and to Divine Karma is not reborn after death, but reaches the Divine Himself.

Ch. IV—C (I) VARIOUS FORMS OF YAGNAS

In order to become a Divine Worker, it is necessary to undergo a long practical training for control of mind, senses and body. Does not this preparatory action of training also amount to a sacrifice in the Cosmic Yagna ?

To attain the status of a Divine Worker is the highest culmination of a man's life and action. In order to attain that stage, he has to undergo a preparatory training, for which various methods have been prescribed. These methods are more or less of a personal rather than of a universal character. But they are since intended to enable him to participate in the Cosmic Yagna activity, have been classified as necessary links of the Divine Yagna. Such practices of sacrifices leading to Brahman Consciousness are many. A few however are given here. The underlying principle is the psychological sacrifice of self-control and also physical sacrifice of mind, senses and body for self-discipline leading to self realisation.

(1) Daivya Yagna.

IV-25. Some persons desirous of personal gains sacrifice their energy in worshipping and concentrating on various nature gods.

(2) Brahman Yagna.

Others offer their sacrifice into the Brahman Fire of the Divine Yagna.

Those who follow after the sacrifice of the gods conceive of the Divine in various forms and powers, and seek him by various means, rituals and dharmas. But those who have the knowledge, offer their sacrifice to the Divine himself by casting all their activities into the unified Divine Consciousness and Energy, and this is their one means and sole Dharma.

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(5) Dravya yagya.

This is a material objective sacrifice of money for public charitable institutions, or sacrifice of grain, clothings and other necessities of life to rel[illegible] the sufferings and needs of the helpless and poor.

(6) Tap Yagya

This includes various types of austere penances for control of senses, mind and body usually adopted by Hat-yogies.

(7) Yogya Yagya.

This includes all practices to secure communion with the Self and then with God. It is also taken to refer to the Ashtang yoga of Patanjali for union with the Nirguna Divine.

(8) Gyan Yagya through Swadhyaya or study of scriptures.

A great importance is given to sat-sanga or good company of men, from whom you can learn. But it is not easily available. Religious scriptures and other work of great men supply an immense material for higher thoughts Their deep study engrosses a man in such thoughts which become their constant companion. Self study (Swadhyaya) is of utmost importance even to an advanced person, and has not to be discarded as some feigned Bhaktas suggest.

(9) Pranayama Yagya

IV-29. Followers of pranayam, sacrifice their in-going breath (Prana) into out-going breath (Apana) and vice versa. They even stop the breathing process in deep meditation.

(10) Niyat Ahara Yagya (Controlled diet)

IV-30. Others who follow after severe regulated fastings, sacrifice their very life (Prana) into the Cosmic Life. Having eliminated their sins resulting from lower nature into the Cosmic Yagya, all these followers of yagyas have knowledge of the spirit of the Cosmic Yagya.

The aspirants of the regulated fastings attempt to eliminate the lower nature of mind, senses, and body by emaciating the physical organs which they suppose to be the main agents of their degenaration. The physical organs

of mind and senses and even of body may be paralised by such austere practices, but their attachment and craving of sense-objects is in no way eliminated. These cravings operate as great dangers and raise their heads like a monster kept suppressed for a long time, on finding the least loop-hole in one's contact with sense objects.

Yagyas lead to Brahman Consciousness

IV-31. Those who enjoy the Bliss resulting from these sacrifices attain the eternal Brahman Consciousness. This world is of no utility to him who does not resort to sacrifices, O best of the workers (Kurusattam) ! how can the world beyond be of any happiness to him ?

These practices of sacrifice purify the lower tendencies of mind, senses and body, and make them immaculate and fit for descent of the Divine Consciousness. One who is ignorant of this method of purification, does not make the best of his life either in this world, or in the astral and mental worlds beyond after death.

All actions of these Yagyas terminate in Divine knowledge (Gyana Yagya).

All these yagyas are the various means to eliminate separative lower tendencies of ego, mind, and senses, in order to discover the true unitary consciousness of cosmic Divine action (Vishwa-Yagya). The first manifestation of Saguna Sachchidananda is the concrete expression of Divine Consciousness and Divine knowledge generally known as Pragya or Vigyan or Divine knowledge of the Mahar Lok. Pure Divine Light shines there as Divine knowledge, Divine Energy and Divine Existence. The Jiva exists in that plane as a Divine Blissful Individual. In this Buddhik plane, the Divine Knowledge works out a plan of creation and of becomings variously in the lower planes. It is an Ideative plan like a blue print of the Divine Architect. The entire

knowledge of Cosmic working of this Blue Print in the various planes is carried into execution in the lower planes by the process of Cosmic Yagya. The Geeta says that Karma or Cosmic Action originate from this Brahman condition. Thus the Cosmic Activity is described as having radiated from the mouth of Brahman (Vitata Brahmano Mukhe), just as the rays of the sun can be symbolically described as having radiated from the mouth of the sun.

This Cosmic Activity or Cosmic Yagya operates in the lower planes of mind, desires, and physical matter (in the three planes of Bhur, Bhuvar, and Swah). Ego principle of separative nature is evolved in the higher mental plane. It acts like a convexo-concave lens, diffusing the unitary spiritual knowledge (Gyan) in multiple separative ways in these lower planes, creating diversity out of unity. This lens of ego has a two-way traffic. In the lower planes it diffuses diversity, and upwards in the spiritual planes it converges diversity into unity.

The various practices of yagys lead one upwards from the regions of diversity to the spiritual region of unity. Action is indispensable for success in the performance of these yagyas in order to convert the separative tendencies of lower nature into the Unitary tendency of spiritual nature. How can this be possible for a man who physically renounces all actions in order to attain some void status, and how will his separative lower nature be transformed into Unitary Spiritual Nature. It is by means of action alone that release from lower nature is possible.

IV-32. The Lord thus says: "Thus various kinds of yagyas radiate from the mouth of Brahman. Know all of them to have originated from the Cosmic Action. With this knowledge of the principles of yagya, you shall be released from all bondages."

IV-C (2)—GYANA YAGYA IS THE CULMINATION OF THE COSMIC ACTION—(IV 33 to 35)

(11) Gyana Yagya.

IV-33. The Lord says, "O Parantapa! Gyana yagya is *superior to the material yagyas. The entire Cosmic* Action terminates in gyana, O Partha !"

The yagyas described above require physical aid for curbing the lower nature of mind, senses and body, and are therefore, called "Material yagyas". Gyan yagya is attainable by psychological process for converting the separative tendency of lower nature into the Unitary tendency of spiritual nature. The former yagyas of material nature constitute the preparatory stage for transcending the lower nature into spiritual nature of gyan yagya. The gyan yagya is thus spoken of as superior to material yagyas.

The unegoistic action required for the performance of these yagyas is in fact in consonance with the Cosmic Yagya (Cosmic Action), and ultimately leads to Divine knowledge and then to Brahman Consciousness. Karma yoga thus terminates in Gyan yoga. One who understands this background of sacrifices gets liberated from lower nature and perceives Inaction in all his actions.

Shri Aurobindo says that Yoga and Knowledge are the two wings of the soul's ascent. By Yoga is meant union through Divine Works done without desire, with equality of soul to all things and all men, at a sacrifice to the supreme. Knowledge (Gyana) is that on which this desirelessness, this equality, this power of sacrifice is founded. The two wings indeed assist each other's flight, acting together like the two eyes in a man which see together because they increase in anothers mutuality by interchange of substance. As the works grow more and more desireless, equal minded, sacrificial in spirits, the knowledge (Gyana) increases. With the increase of the knowledge (Gyana), the soul becomes firmer in the desireless, sacrificial equality of its works.

The Karma yoga of Geeta is more or less an ascent from below. Such ascent attracts the descent of Divine Knowledge from above. A man riding on this double wheeled chariot can safely glide over the highest reaches of the spiritual firmament. Karma yoga and gyan yoga are the two complementary processes for safe return of man to his original Divine Abode

Can we attain this knowledge by our personal efforts without any external aid?

Personal efforts in this direction may at times prove futilé on account of various adverse forces, attempting to misguide and thwart your progress on the right lines. These adverse forces of desire, anger, greed, attachment (Moh) and pride etc. have firmly established their suzereignty over our nature, and they offer strong resistance against any intrusion by higher forces. Guidance of an expert becomes necessary to keep us on the right path. Our inner self (Antratma) once awakened becomes the most infallible guide on the spiritual path. But since we are not yet conscious of it, there arises the necessity of an external guide who has already awakened his inner self sudhas acquired spiritual knowledge (Gyana). On account of his personal experience he guides his disciple and enables him to awaken his inner self. After self-realisation the disciple becomes a true *bhakta* and the God himself becomes his guide for further progress in the spiritual realms.

But so long as the inner self has not been realised (Amtadarshana), external aid of a personal guru remains necessary. It is not by wandering about restlessly that the guru can be found. It is only by first treading the preliminary step of self-purification that the Guru can and does manifest himself. When the disciple is ready, the Guru appears. When however the right stage of development has been reached, and the disciple has found his Guru, he must by complete obedience, self-effacement, and surrender of his will,

unite his entire being with that of the Guru, *in order that the Wisdom which shines in him may light up in the disciple too.*

Guru is not an ordinary mundane teacher. He is a spiritual teacher who guides us on the untrodden path full of precipitous pitfalls and other dangers. He gives caution and shows light on dangerous spots. He has to take full charge of the disciple's well-being, but he can dischage this duty only if the disciple approaches him with complete *humility, faith and surrender. The disciple must unlearn* what he has learnt and rely solely on Guru's guidance. He has to approach the Guru with a clean slate, put aside all, his unripe mental concepts, and catch-words, which he has borrowed ready-made from others. He has to give up mental pride of his bookish knowledge and remove his doubts by referring them to the Guru, with a searching mind but with utmost humility, reverence and sub-servience (Sevaya). In the absence of such mental attitude, one may go to the greatest spiritual Teacher, but gain nothing from him. A *spiritually advanced man is always anxious to lead others on the Divine Path, on condition* that the disciple does not make reception of Knowledge impossible by sticking to his *old habits of moving in a fixed mental grove.*

IV-34. The Lord thus says that you should acquire Divine Wisdom (Gyan) by worshipping at the feet of the Teacher, and by questioning him with humble sub-servience (Sevaya) The wise teacher having practical vision of the principle of Divine Wisdom, will then instruct you in that Knowledge.

IV-C(3) GYAN AND ITS EFFECT ON CONSCIOUSNESS (IV—35)

What is the Divine *Knowledge (Gyana) and what* change does it bring about ?

Divine knowledge or Gyana is quite different from intellectual mundane knowledge. It is not acquired by intellectualising or reasoning, which are faulty and

indefinite. It descends in our being by intuition, inspiration, and even by revelation, without any mental effort on our part, when we become a suitable receptacle.

Sachchidananda Brahman manifests Himself at the first stage as Cosmic Consciousness, Cosmic Knowledge, Cosmic Energy in the Buddhic plane of Mahar Lok. These Divine Forces manipulate the creation of multiple existence. It is in this Buddhic plane that the One Cosmic Self manifests as multiple individual selves as a result of the Divine Will to become many. Our inner self is constituted of the Divine Knowledge and is virtually a creature of it as one of the first manifested (Jivatmas) individual being in the Mahar lok. Divine Wisdom is the natural intrinsic expression of our inner self. Thus one who attains Buddhic Consciousness (Gyana) *realises all multiple selves as his own self, and all* selves as part and parcel of Cosmic Self. This consciousness of visualising Unity in the midst of diversity then becomes an effortless natural function of mind. When this buddhic consciousness (Gyana) gets fully settled the aspirant begins to visualise a still Higher Truth and experiences the Divine himself pervading all individual selves. His consciousness of individuality gets encompassed by the Cosmic Unitary Consciousness of the Divine and he is attracted into the Divine Embrace. He gets over all attractions and delusions of lower nature, and thus gets liberated from the bondage of action.

IV-35. The Lord says that by developing the Divine Knowledge you shall not fall again into the delusion of mind and senses, O Pandava ! you will on the other hand visualise all multiple selves without exception as your own self. Later on you will visualise all selves existing in the Conscious Divine Self.

IV—C 4) POTENTIALITY OF GYAN

Is the Gyan consciousness possible of attainment by a man engrossed in sinful life ?

Buddhic consciousness of Gyan is already involved in the Vigyan-maya kosh of even the worst sinner though lying dormant in supra-conscient state (Sushupti). Cosmic Nature is bound to awaken it in its own slow evolutionary process. But there is no reason why it cannot be awakened sooner if one is intent unon doing so. It is a hidden treasure which he has to unearth. There is no escape for him so long as he remains dominated by ego, mind and senses. In order to discover that treasure lying buried deep in himself, he has to transfer his allegiance to the Divine seated within his heart, with earnest faith, surrender and aspiration for His guidance, and demolish the solid rocks that cover the Gyan by control of senses and mind. Once he succeeds in removing these obstacles and reaching the shore of the spiritual ocean, he embarks upon the ship of spiritual knowledge, all his old anchorages which kept him tied to the world, will automatically get untied, and all the downward dragging ropes of bondages of past actions will be swept away by the strong upward swelling surges of the spiritual ocean. The milky white ocean of pure Knowledge (Kshir-sagar) is the greatest cleanser of all impurities and dissolver of all obstacles on the path of safe Home return.

IV-36 The Lord says that even if you are the greatest of all sinners, you will cross over all sins by embarking on the ship of this Divine knowledge.

IV-37 O Arjun ! Just as fire reduces fuel to ashes, similarly the fire of Divine knowledge once kindled, destroys all bondages of past actions.

IV-38 There is nothing more sacred and purifying in this world than Divine knowledge. A perfected Buddhi yogi experiences that knowledges within his own self in course of time.

Divine knowledge is not a mental realisation. It is the awakening of the dormant consciousness of our inner self, which transforms the experience of diversity into that of spiritual unity.

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Is the Gyan consciousness possible of attainment by a man engrossed in sinful life ?

accelerates its speed by geometrical progression, as a result of the upward Divine Pull. The space traveller is thus immediately relieved from the old moorings of mortal world and is assuredly attracted to his original Divine Abode of eternal peace. In this flight both wings of Karma and Gyan are surrendered and dedicated for approaching the Divine. This chapter is thus wisely headed as "Union by surrender of Karma and Gyan (Gyan Karma Sanyas Yoga)."

IV-41 The Lord says that you should surrender all your actions in Karma Yoga, and cleave your doubts by resorting to Gyan Yoga. Becoming possessed of Self-Consciousness, your actions will not create bondage for you.

IV-42 Therefore, cut assunder all doubts of your heart arising out of Ignorance, by the sword of Gyan, and O Bharat ! establish yourself in Divine Union and stand up for action.

Shri Aurovindo says that when the Geeta asserts that all the totality of works finds its completion in knowledge, or that the fire of knowledge turns all works to ashes, it is not at all meant that there is cessation from works. What is meant by the Geeta is made clear in Verse 40 which says that the man of Yoga and Knowledge is not bound by his works. Geeta does not advocate renunciation of action either to a Karma Yogi or to a Gyan Yogi. The Lord emphatically commands Arjun to stand up for action guided by the principles of Karma Yoga and Gyan Yoga. Such an action is bound to be the most skillful action of an expert worker, since it will not be accompanied by attachment to its fruit and its consequent bondage. Action is bound to produce a result and one cannot in any case avoid it. If there is no motive for attaining a certain end, action will be reduced to a listless mechanism justifying a total withdrawal from world. The sting of action lies in one's attachment to the result

IV-39 This Divine Knowledge can be attained by one who surrenders to the Divine with complete faith, and who has controlled his mind and senses. Once this Divine Knowledge is attained he is immediately led to Supreme Peace.

IV-40 The ignorant who lacks in faith and whose lower self is deluded by doubts is destined to perdition. Such a doubting soul cannot attain happiness, or make the best of his life either in this world, or in the worlds beyond after death.

IV—C(5) KARMA AND GYAN ARE THE TWO JETS OF SPIRITUAL SPUTNIK.

This is the age of atomic energy and sputniks and the modern impatient mind urges that this space urge calls for a gigantic speedy jet process to enable a man to explore the Cosmic Spiritual regions in shortest possible time. The frame of such a sputnik has already been provided by Nature in our constitution, but due to the rusty parts of the machine, the tremendous jet power to work it is lying dormant, having lost its propelling energy to take a flight. These rusty parts of ego, mind and senses must be thoroughly cleansed by Karma Yoga, and all psychological doubts and stumbling blocks, dumping the jet energy of our aspiration must be removed by Gyan Yoga. This preparatory work of harnessing the Karma Yoga and Gyan Yoga jets when completed, the full propelling energy of these double engines of Action (Karma), and the driving skill wisdom (Gyan) will be restored to their full capacity. The Divine sputnik then takes a flight with tremendous speed in the spiritual regions, and it takes no time for it to reach the Divine embrace of Eternal peace and bliss (Achirenadhi gachhatti). The rider is lifted beyond the gravitation of wordly attraction. into the gravitation of the spiritual region. Once this sputnik enters the region of Spiritual Gravitation, it

CHAPTER V

UNION BY INNER RENUNCIATION

V-A SANYAS AND KARMA YOGA

It was stressed in the last Chapter that the fundamental principle of Karma Yoga lay in visualising Inaction in Action. It may be rightly argued that the Geeta virtually admits the necessity of Inaction for spiritual uplift; but that it only beats about the bush, when it advocates an unpractical theory of visualising Inaction in Action, like a hypnotic vision of seeing black as white, and white as black, or calling day as night and night as day. Arjun has not yet caught the nicety of the subtle principles of Karma Yoga, and naturally requests the Lord to clear his confusion on the point. He is strongly pre-possessed with the doctrine of Sankhya Sanyas and cannot reconcile the theory of Karma Yoga with that of Sanyas. He is anxious to know as to which of the two paths would lead to his well-being. He thus questions the Lord as follows:

V-1. O Krishna, You praise Sanyas (Inaction), and at the same time speak highly of Karma Yoga. Please give me your decisive opinion as to which of the two is more conducive to my well-being?

V-2. The Lord says: Sanyas and Karma Yoga are both conducive to highest well-being. But out of the two Karma Yoga has a speciality over Karma Sanyas or renunciation of action.

V-3. A constant Sanyasi is one who is free from attraction or aversion. O Arjun, such a man liberated from dualities happily gets released from all bondages.

Renunciation is accepted both by Sankhia and Karma Yoga as the fundamental principle of Divine approach. Sankhya Sanyas lays stress on outer Renunciation by total withdrawal from the world and its activities. Karma Yoga

and it is this craving for result that has been advised to be given up. Motive thus continues to remain the incentive of action of a Karma Yogi, but devoid of craving for the result. The actions of a Karma Yogi result in no bondage, since he begins to visualise Inaction in Action. This is the standard angle of vision of a Gyan Yogi in the performance of actions in this world.

Thus ends Chapter IV entitled "Gyan Karma Sanyas Yoga"

V-B SUCCESSIVE STAGES OF THE DIVINE PATH (V-7)

FOUR STEPS OF KARMA YOGA

What are the progressive stages which a Karma Yogi has to develop for attaining Brahman Consciousness ?

A man usually lives in his individual egoistic consciousness having a prominent idea of his predominance over others. Brahman Consciousness is universal and non-egoistic. A Karma Yogi attains it by gradual development of his consciousness in four stages First four steps are necessary for crossing bondage of Action

(1) Sense and mind control. (Jitendriya)

(2) Purification of the lower self attached to ego, and mind etc. (Vishuddha Atma)

(3) Victorious attainment of higher self. (Vijit Atma)

(4) Development of equal vision to all creatures (Sarva Bhut-Atma Bhut-Atma or Sam-Darshan Bhao)

By successfully passing through these stages a Karma Yogi unites himself with Brahma, becomes Yoga-Yukta and although participating in all necessary actions of the world creates no bondage as a result.

V-7. The Lord thus says that he who has establised himself in Yoga, who has purified his lower self and has gained victorious march in his Higher Self ; who has controlled his senses, and who has developed equal vision to the selves of all creatures, does not get bound in spite of his continuing to perform actions.

V—B(1) FIRST STEP OF SENSE-CONTROL. (V—8 & 9.)

(Jitendriya)

By what process does a Karma Yogi attain control over mind and senses ?

A Karma Yogi mentally detaches himself from the relish of sense activities considering them as a machination of

on the other hand, insists on performance of necessary actions even by the highest realised person, but with the technique of psychological renunciation of a craving for the fruit and thereby to remain unaffected by the dualities of success or failure, pleasure or pain, sin or virtue etc. This is the true spirit of Sanyas and not necessarily a physical withdrawal from the world on some hill top or cave. A true Sanyasi is thus said to be one who performs all actions but is ever unaffected by attraction or aversion or by other dualities of world experience. His progress towards the release from the bondages of the world is happy and sure. A man who renounces all actions by physical withdrawal from the world may also succeed in his attempt, but not without hankerings, repentance or relish of sense objects, and may find his progress unhappy for being compelled to lead an austere hard life of forcible supression of nature.

V 4. The Lord says, it is the puerile intellect that speaks of Sankhya and Yoga as different from each other and not the wise. If a man applies himself integrally to one he gets the fruit of both.

V-5. The status which is attained by Sankhya Sanyas is also attained by a Karma Yogi. One whe sees Sankhya and Yoga as one, has the true vision.

The ultimate goal of a Sankhya Sanyasi by outer renunciation is the same as that of a Karma Yoga Sanyasi or Tyagi by Inner Renunciation. The difference lies in the fact that the process of outer renunciation by Sankhya method is too difficult to succeed without the practice of Inner Renunciation of Karma Yoga. A Karma Yogi attains Brahman Consciousness sooner than a Sankhya Sanyasi.

V-6 The Lords says: O mighty-armed, success by the practice of outer renunciation (Sanyas) is difficult to obtain by one who has not practised inner renunciation (Tyag) of Karma Yoga. The sage who has established himself in Yoga soon attains Brahman Consciousness.

Brahman Activity, and consequently remains unaffected by bondages of sins or virtues. Yoga of works is better than the physical renunciation of works. Yoga of works is the offering of all action to the Lord, which induces an inner and not an outer, a spiritual and not a physical surrender of works to the Brahman (Brahmana-Adhaya-Karmani). When works are thus reposed on the Brahman, the personality of the instrumental doer ceases. Though he acts, he does nothing, for he has given up not only the fruits of his works, but the works themselves, and the doing of them to the Lord. The Divine then takes the burden of works from him. The supreme becomes the doer, the act, and the result. This attitude results in the elimination of bondages of action. This is the culmination and inner import of sense control by their dedication to the Divine for Cosmic action, and not by deadening or paralysing them.

V-10. The Lord says : He who having abandoned attachment acts founding his works on the Brahman, is not clinged by sin as a lotus leaf is not clinged by water.

V-B (2)—SECOND STAGE OF SELF-PURIFICATION (Vishuddha-Atma)—(V-11, 12, 13, 14, 15.)

Why does a man get bound by action ?

There are two aspects of self in man, generally known as Higher self (Parah-Purush) and lower self (Antar-Atma). The higher self is a portion of the Divine as its microcosm. It is eternally free and above the Gunas immune from any bondage of action. He is seated in the hearts of every man and indirectly witnesses, sanctions, supports and enjoys as the Lord, the play of nature. The lower self (Antar-Atma) identifies itself with ego, mind, senses and body. It gets bound by the actions of the lower nature and becomes subject to birth and death (Ch. XIII-21, 22).

It is this lower ego self which is required to be purified for realisation of the Higher Self. A Divine worker

Nature. He begins to realise that sense activities are the results of the interaction of senses upon the outer sense objects, with which his inner self has no concern. Thus he mentally feels that inspite of all natural activities of his senses, he is not the real actor. Geeta prescribes this psychological practice for sense control, in contrast to the austere objective method of forcible supression of Nature. Knowing this principle the Karma Yogi feels that it is the Nature that is working out the mind and senses, and that he is not in fact a doer at all. Like an ordinary man he sees through his eyes, hears through his ears, tastes by his tongue, smells by his nose, eats by his mouth, moves by his feet, and sleeps, breathes, speaks, takes in, ejects out the refuge, opens his eyes and closes them. But he realises that these are the natural functions of senses interacting upon sense objects, and thus keeps himself unaffected and unattached to these sensations and thereby obtains a genuine control over his senses. This is a psychological method of obtaining victory over senses in contrast to the austere method of mortifying and paralysing the sense organs themselves.

V-8 The Lord says : The one who is in union with cosmic action and who knows the essential principles of action, mentalies, "I am not doing anything in the least" He believes that the processes of seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing,

V-9 Speaking, giving, grasping, ejecting, opening and closing of the eye lids, all these as the Nature's processes resulting from interaction of senses upon sense objects.

A Karma Yogi thus utilises all organs of his body in the performance of world actions, but completely disassociates himself from the egoistic ideas of his being a meritorious worker. He begins to realise that it is the Divine who works through him as a link of the Cosmic chain of action (Yagna).

He ceases to have any personal attachment to his actions or to their result. He reposes his actions on the Cosmic

V-13. The sense-controlled yogi (Vashi) by mentally renouncing all actions (Manasa Sannystha) rested blissfully and serenely in the nine-gated city of his body, neither acting nor causing to act.

This is how a yogi truly visualises Inaction in action. On attaining such bliss he is no longer required to keep a strict watch over the gate of his senses and body for fear of a raid by lower nature. Although performing all necessary actions by his mind, senses, and body, he remains a non-doer mentally and dwells in Eternal Peace.

V-14. He realises that the Lord is not the Creator of activity or the doer of actions and has no hand in connecting an action with its result. He fee's that all this functioning is the work of Nature.

V-15. The all-pervading Lord accepts neither the sins nor the virtues of a man. It is his own nature of Ignorance that conceals true knowledge and deludes the creatures.

V—B (3) THIRD STAGE OF SELF-CONQUEST OR SELF-REALISATION. (V—16 & 17)

The first two stages of sense-control and purification of lower self are the two preparatory steps for securing a victorious entry in the spiritual region of Divine Wisdom (Gyan). The aspirant thereby immediately comes face to face with that Supreme Self seated within his heart. The preparatory steps of self-realisation generally result in depression, dejection and disappointment in the mind of the devotee, because his lower nature continues to persist its own habits inspite of vigorous efforts. But once he is ready Divine Knowledge grows in him and reveals the Higher-self in no time, like the sun dispelling all darkness.

V-16. The Lord says: Verily in whom Ignorance is destroyed by Divine Knowledge, in them this Knowledge illuminates that Supreme Self within them like the Sun illuminating and dispelling all darkness.

controls his senses and mind and dedicates his works to the Cosmic Brahman by renouncing attachment to works or to their fruits He thereby dissolves his ego, mind and senses in the Cosmic ego, Cosmic mind, and Cosmic senses of the Cosmic Virat Purush Having renounced personal attachment to action and to its fruits, he creates no bondage for rebirth He thus purifies his lower self and conquers Lower Nature, and getting immune from the effects of dualities, enjoys perfect peace. He realises that attachment to desires is the sole cause of unhappiness and bondage, and that it is the Nature that is responsible for all actions and their results, and that the Cosmic Higher Self, the Lord of his Nature remains always unconcerned with the virtuous or sinful nature of actions Having thus mentally (Manasa) renounced all actions, he treats his mind, Buddhi,'body and senses as mere channels of Divine Action and thus purifies his lower self and attains perfect peace He leads a life of perfect freedom and bliss free from all dangers of raids of Lower Nature through the nine open gates of his body. He realises that a man's nature is responsible for his evolution or involution and for all his sufferings The Lord of Nature is like a power house supplying energy to Nature He remains quite unconcerned regarding its use or misuse by our Nature It is therefore useless to blame God for our sufferings since we are ourselves responsible for them due to our ignorance of true nature of action

V-11 The Lord thus says that in order to purify lower self (Atma Shuddhya), a karma yogi considers his body, senses, and mind as mere channels of Cosmic Brahman Action, but acts through them by renouncing attachment to the action or to its result

V-12 A Yogi who thus unifies himself with Brahma Action by renouncing fruits of his actions, attains the highest aspired peace (Naishtkim Shantim) But the man not thus in union remains attached to fruits and gets bound as a result of desire

V-19. The Lord says: One whose mind is stabilised in equal-visioned consciousness before death, has virtually conquered the world. *Since Brahman is undifferentiated,* and flawlessly equal-visioned, such a Yogi gets established in Brahmic consciousness.

Experience of Brahmic consciousness

V-20. The Brahman Knower established in Brahmic consciousness stabilised in Divine Wisdom, unbewildered by lower nature, neither rejoices in pleasant acquisitions nor *gets upset by unpleasant happenings.*

V-21. The happiness that one experiences in his self by detachment from external objects, a similar imperishable happiness is experienced by a Yogi who has united his self with Brahman or Cosmic-Self.

V-22. He realises that all enjoyments born of contacts with external objects are the causes of one's sufferings, and that they are transient having a beginning and end. Being endowed with Divine Wisdom he never indulges in them.

V-23. Truly united with Brahman and truly happy *man is he who enables himself in his lifetime* before leaving his body, to bear the ferocious impacts of desire and wrath.

V—C (2) SIXTH STAGE OF BRAHMAN-BECOMING (BRAHMAN BHUT) AND BRAHMAN-NIRVAN (V-24 to 28)

On attainment of Cosmic Brahman-Consciousness the Yogi experiences supreme happiness solely in his inner self, and *inspite of wandering about* in search of pleasures and peace in the world of ignorance dwelling in the realm of mind and senses, he begins to dwell and repose *in his self of* eternal light in the midst of continued inner happiness. He thus transforms his lower being of ego, mind and senses into a spiritual being and becomes an embodiment of Brahman.

V-17. Rivetting their Buddhi in that, their self in That, making That their whole aim and the sole object of their devotion and surrendering their entire being to That, they go whence there is no return, and their sins are washed away by the Divine Knowledge.

V—B (4) FOURTH STAGE OF UNITARY SELF-VISION. (V-18)

By development of Divine Wisdom (Gyan) and realisation of higher self, the Yogi intently feels all selves of multiple creatures as one with his own self. His mental outlook of differentiation and discrimination towards other creatures whether of a high or low type, disappears, he begins to instinctively feel and visualise the Unitary subjective principle constituting the diverse forms. He thus becomes equal-visioned (Sam-Darshan).

V-18. Sages see with an equal eye a Brahmin adorned with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog or a fallen and degraded human being.

V—C (1) FIFTH STAGE OF BRAHMIC-CONSCIOUSNESS AND ITS EXPERIENCE. (V-19 to 23)

Brahma-sthiti

Development of equal vision, and realisation of higher self lead to the transformation of individual consciousness into the Brahmic-consciousness of Cosmic Self. It has to be attained here while living in this world. The earthly consciousness of diversity is then transformed into that of unity. This can be done only while a man is living in this physical plane. After death no such transformation is possible, since the world is the only field of action (Karma-Bhumi) for any kind of evolutionary development. Perfect spiritual freedom is to be won here upon earth. and possessed and enjoyed in this physical body.

Yogi who attains Nirvan consciousness realises the eternal peace of the static Satchidananda, and maintains it even while working in the world for 'the welfare of the created existence. He does not dissolve himself in nothingness, or in a joyless stoic state of some supposed non-existence or void. A gem like him is not lost to the world by his attainment of Nirvan status. He works in perfect peace and enjoys the Divine play in the multiple universe. He is a more efficient worker than any person who works under the stress of ego and mind.

He behaves as a perfect Divine person full of Divine Wisdom, Divine Energy and Divine Anand with the object of Divine fulfilment in this existence. Our experience of sages who behave with predominant whimsical idiosyncrasies may be of those whose ways we are unable to comprehend, or of those who have fallen from Spiritual heights due to some weaknesses of mind, desire or body.

V-24. The Lord says that he who has the inner happiness, inner ease and repose, and the inner light, that Yogi becomes the Brahman and reaches Brahman-Nirvan Status.

V-25. Brahman Nirvan Status is attained by sages in whom the stains of sin are effaced and the knot of doubt is cut assunder, Masters of their selves, and who have devoted themselves for the welfare of all creatures.

The sage who has acquired Nirvan status absolves himself from the law of Causation, which create bondages of sin or virtue. He is not affected by impacts of dualities although living in their midst, and always remains intent upon doing works for the welfare and spiritual evolution of all beings. He is thus in fact a more dynamic worker than an ordinary man, though his actions are prompted by his Nirvanic Consciousness of perfect peace. He is not thus lost to the world by his achievement of Nirvan Status.

Consciousness (Brahman-Bhut). This Brahman Bhut Consciousness is the consciousness of a Divine worker living and acting as a Divine instrument in Kshar Brahman Existence.

The Yogi thus prepares himself for entry in the static Nirgun-Brahman Consciousness where his ego and individuality gets dissolved. This liberated status is known as Nirvan. Shri Aurovindo says that Nirvan needs the extinction of the ego in the higher spiritual inner Self, that which is for ever timeless, spaceless, not bound by the chain of cause and effect, and the changes of the world-mutation, self-blissful, self-illumined, and for ever at peace. The Yogin ceases to be the ego, the little person limited by the mind and the body. He becomes the Brahman, he is unified in consciousness with the immutable Divinity of the eternal Self, which is immanent in his natural being. But is this a going in into some deep sleep of Samadhi away from all world consciousness, or is it the preparatory movement for a dissolution of the natural being and the individual soul into some absolute Self, who is utterly and for ever beyond Nature and her works ? (Laya).

Freedom from all strain of the passions, the self-mastery of the equal mind on which that freedom is founded, equality to all beings, and beneficial love for all, final destruction of that doubt and obscurity of the ignorance, which keeps us divided from the all-unifying Divine and the knowledge of the One Self within us and in all, are evidently the conditions of Nirvan. Thus Nirvan is clearly compatible with world-consciousness and with action in the world. The Sages who possess it are conscious of and in intimate relation by works, with the Divine in the Mutable Universe (Kshar existence). They are occupied with the good of all creatures (Sarva-Bhuta hite rata).

The Brahman bhuta Yogi realises the dynamic cosmic consciousness of Sagun Satchidananda manifesting as the creator, preserver and destroyer in this Brahmanda. The

enveloping him alround, works out all his activities in life, in that liberated consciousness.

V-27, 28. The sage *striving after liberation (Moksh-Parayanh)* should be deemed to have been eternally liberated (Sada-Mukta).

(1) who repels impacts of external sense objects without being affected by them,

(2) whose consciousness always remains concentrated in his inner Self-vision on the centre between the eyebrows,

(3) who remains indifferent even to his mortal life and treats his in-going and out-going breaths, on which his life depends, as mere *passers-by in* the channels of his nostrils.

(4) who has subdued his mind, senses and intellect, and

(5) who is immune from the effects of impacts of desire, fear, and wrath.

These two verses may be interpreted to depict the highest attainment of Samadhi by an ascetic who has physically withdrawn from the world and its actions by outer renunciation (Sanyas). In order to avoid sense contacts even physically he flees for refuge on a distant mountain top, or buries himself underground, with eyes inverted and centred between eyebrows, and stops even the inhaling and exhaling process of breath by Pranayam. We come across some sages who take such Samadhi for days and days, and remain sitting breathless and sense-functioning suspended, underground in a hermetically sealed cave. But even this abnormal achievement is no guarantee of their having attained the highest Divine realisation. They may be temporarily transported by such trance in some spiritual plane, but on their return to normal consciousness, they may find themselves again in the tussle of violent waves of mind and senses Inaction (Sanyas) may not prove to be the panacea for a permanent cure of this malady. Verse

V-C (3) SEVENTH STAGE OF ABSOLUTE LIBERATION

(Moksh, Sada Mukta)

A sage who acquires Nirvan status transforms his separative individual consciousness though liberated from lower nature, into Cosmic liberated Brahman Consciousnes. His lower consciousness being subjugated, he becomes immune from the raids of desire and wrath. He realises his self as one with all selves as well as with the Cosmic Self. He transports himself from the Cosmic environments and surroundings of lower nature into the envirorment and surroundings of the liberated Divine Nature. Thus he not only develops liberated Nirvan Consciousness in his own Self, but begins to practically live in the midst of Cosmic Brahman-Nirvan surroundings. He has the inner vision of experiencing liberation even while living and acting in the world

As a result of this Cosmic liberated Consciousness, the sage seeking after absolute liberation, instinctively repels and remains indifferent to the impacts of sense attractions. He even ceases to cling to mortal life, and treats with indifference his ingoing and out-going breaths the sole basis of his life, as mere passers-by through the channels of his nostrils, because he solely concentrates his life in his Immortal Higher Self. Having subdued his senses, mind and intellect (Budhhi), and having delivered himself from attractions of desire, fear and wrath, he attains eternal liberation of Purushottam (Sada Mukta). He thus acts and realises liberation not only in the Self within, but also realises the Eternal liberation of Cosmic Self without, and all over in the entire existence.

V-26. The Lord thus says: that the sage striving after liberation (Yati) who has subdued his lower consciousness (Yat chetsam), who has absolved himself from the effects of impacts of desire and wrath, and who has realised his Self, through him the Brahman Nirvan Consciousness

Shri Aurovindo says that the knowledge of the active Brahman, the Cosmic Super-soul, is insisted on among the conditions of the peace of Nirvan. We get back to the great idea of Geeta, the idea of the Purushottam—though that name is not given till close upon the end. It is always that (idea) which Krishna means by his "I" and 'Me", the Divine who is there as the one self in our timeless immutable being, who is present too in the world, in all existences, in all activities, the master of the Silence and Peace, the master of the power and the action, who is here incarnate as the Divine Charioteer of the stupendous conflict. He is the enjoyer of all sacrifice and of all Tapasya, therefore, shall the seeker of liberation do works and sacrifice and as a Tapasya. He is the Lord of all the worlds manifested in Nature and in these beings, therefore the liberated man shall still do works for the right government and leading on of the peoples in these worlds (Loka-Sangraha). He is the friend of all existences, and therefore, the sage who has found Nirvan within him and all around, is still and always occupied with the good of all creatures. Therefore, even when he has found oneness with the Divine in his timeless and immutable Self, he is still capable of Divine love for man and of love for the Divine and of Bhakti.

Thus comes to an end Chapter V entitled "Union by inner renunciation of action"

28, therefore, prescribes as a necessary condition of eternal liberation, the practice of controlling mind, senses and intellect, and of eliminating personal desire, fear and wrath, by practically facing their impacts while acting in the world. Withdrawal from the world and its actions can afford no opportunity for conquest over these agents of lower nature.

Geeta does not lend support to Inaction by outer renunciation of Sanyas, and much less can it be expected to preach such breathless Samadhi which is the finale of Inaction, as the highest state of a God-realised person. According to Geeta, a sage of such realisation remains intent upon the well-being of all creatures, which in practice cannot be possible by withdrawal and non-cooperation with the world.

V—C (4) EIGHTH STAGE—REALISATION OF SUPREME LORD

Brahman Nirvan status may still remain dry, joyless and stoical unless complemented by Divine Love, and Divine Peace. Karma Yoga and Gyan Yoga are preparatory steps for final consummation of eternal Nirvan by implementing it with Bhakti or Divine Love with complete surrender to the Supreme Lord, the Purushottam. On realisation of the Supreme Divine status, the sage realises that the entire multiple creation is a manifestation of Divine Bliss, and that all efforts of self-sacrifice, self-purification and self-giving are accepted and responded by the Lord for his spiritual uplift as the Divine Grace. As a result of the implementation of the objective liberation from world attractions by intense love and devotion to the Supreme, the sage becomes one with the Divine, enters his embrace and experiences eternal peace.

V 29. The Lord thus says that : Having realised Me, as the enjoyer of all austerities and sacrifices, as the Over-Lord of all planes (Lokas), and as the well-wisher of all creatures, the sage attains Divine Peace.

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part of our constitution, and (2) to purify the lower self of ego and mind (Vishuddha-Atma).

- Higher up in the Spiritual Hierarchy above this lower self is seated our Higher Self (Jivatma) which is a portion of the Cosmic Divine. After crossing the first two stages of sense control and self purification, the aspirant is led into the Unitary Consciousness of Divine Wisdom, in which he visualises his Higher Self as identically the same as the selves of all creatures. This self realisation constitutes the third progressive stage of Vijit-Atma or Self conquest and the fourth stage of equal vision (Sam-Darshan).

Performance of action by inner renunciation as laid down by Karma Yoga is the best means of progress for the aspirant of the Divine path (Aru-ruksha). After he has ridden on the Divine path (Yogarudh), self-mastery becomes the sole means of further spiritual progress.

Shri Aurovindo says that the problem is then no longer of our personal action, but of the working of the Divine Will through us in the Universe. To understand that we must know what this Supreme being is in himself and in Nature, what the working of Nature leads to, and what the intimate relation between the soul involved in Nature, and the Supreme soul is. This chapter enters into the methods of realisation of our subjective spiritual aspect, which is the chief nucleus of our objective existence.

If performance of desireless action is the sole means of spiritual progress, what would be the fate of a Sanyasi who physically renounces all actions ? What justification is there for the assertion that Sanyas and Yoga both lead to the same goal, and that it is foolish to call them as incompatible and different ?

Geeta traces out the true sense of Sanyas, which includes inner renunciation for its perfection. It says that a true Sanyasi is one who performs all actions without any craving or dependence on fruit, and not one who physically with-

CHAPTER VI

VI-A (1)—ASPIRANT OF THE DIVINE PATH (ARU-RUKSH)—(VI—1, 2, 3)

The Divine Path has been divided into three stages called respectively (1) the way of purification by Karma Yoga, (2) the way of illumination by Buddhi Yoga or Gyan Yoga, and (3) the way of Unity by Bhakti Yoga. The sixth Chapter marks the transition to the way of illumination. It sets forth the technique of mental discipline intended to transfer the consciousness unbrokenly from its ordinary waking condition to those supra-mental level, which up to this point have been working as it were behind the scene.

The first stage of the Sadhana is that of Karma Yoga by inner renunciation of action and its fruit. It results in the purification of the lower self of ego and mind, and enlightens in the aspirant the Unitary vision of Divine Wisdom (Gyan). These two stages enable him to get over the Law of Causation, and liberate him from the bondage of recurring births and deaths. He thus crosses the domain of Death (Mriyutum tirtva). In order to further climb to the higher spiritual level of Divine Bliss (Amaratatva), it is indispensable for him to realise his higher self as well as the Cosmic Self.

Our constitution consists of a complex combination of Nature (Kshetra) and spirit (Kshetragya). Physical body (Annamaya-Kosh), Desire body (Pranmaya-Kosh), Mental body (Manomaya-Kosh), and Causal body of ego (Karan-Sharir) constitute the objective aspect of Nature. Each of these bodies has its respective subjective nucleus to control, regulate and vivify it. This subjective nucleus consisting of ego-self, mental-self, desire-self and physical self is termed as lower Self, Antar-Atma, Pratyak-Atma. The objective of Karma Yoga by inner renunciation is (1) to control and regulate the senses (Jitendriya) and to purify the objective

action and its result. He has to qualify himself as a Jitendriya and to purify his lower self nature (Vishuddha-Atma). He does works without desire and attachment, without the egoistic personal will, and the mental seeking which is the parent of desire. He has conquered his lower self and reached the perfect calm. It is only after he has crossed the first two stages of Sadhana *i.e.* (1) of sense control and (2) of self purification, that he attains the status of Yoga-rudh. He thereafter realises the further spiritual stages by practice of subjective methods pointed out in this chapter.

VI-4. The Lord says that when one ceases to get attracted by the objects of senses, or to get attached to works, and has renounced all will of desire, then he is said to have ascended on the Path of Divine Union.

THE THIRD STAGE OF SELF-CONQUEST (Vijit-atma)

The most important initial step that a Yoga-rudh has to take is to gain perfect mastery of his Nature self of ego and mind with the aid of his higher spiritual self. Our higher self is the pure Divine Self within us but at the present stage of evolution man is not yet conscious of it, but works solely under the domination of his Nature self. This nature of lower self is one's natural enemy which keeps him involved in the recurring rounds of birth and death. Physical efforts to curb its tendencies prove of little avail. Geeta prescribes a subjective method to conquer the lower Nature self. The higher self is our true Central Being and unless we surrender and awaken ourselves to its influence and guidance, it is impossible to curb the lower Nature. Our higher self then works as our true friend and guide. If one does not take advantage of this guide within himself, he acts virtually as his own enemy.

VI.5. The Lord says that a Yoga-rudh should liberate his lower self by the light of his higher self, and should not allow the lower self to degrade him still further. The higher self is the true friend and guide of the lower

draws from action even to the extent of renouncing use of fire. Outer renunciation (Sanyas) may be resorted to temporarily as a part of practical training of inner renunciation. One cannot secure an effectual footing in the College of Divinity without undergoing a preparatory schooling in the practical field of Nature.

Science has succeeded in harnessing the unruly wild energies of electricity, heat, light, sound and magnetism etc. by boldly facing them with regular experimentation and practical analysis, and not by cowardly withdrawing all contacts with them. Similarly the principle of inner renunciation (Tyag) of Karma Yoga is a scientific discovery of ancient sages, to harness the unruly ferocious tendercies of lower nature (Maya) for man's spiritual uplift. This discovery is the result of delving deep in the very midst of these involutary forces of senses, mind and Nature, and not of withdrawal from their contacts out of fear.

Geeta therefore asserts that action by inner renunciation is the means of progress for an aspirant of Divine path.

VI-1. The Lord thus says that a Sanyasi or Yogi is one who performs all necessary actions without dependence on fruit, and not the one who remains actionless and does not even ignite fire (treating it as an action).

VI-2. What they call Sanyas, know it in truth to be the Yoga, for none becomes a Yogi who has not renounced desire-will from his mind.

VI-3. For an aspirant of the Divine path (Aru-ruksh) performance of action is said to be the means of ascent. For one who has established himself on the Divine Path (Yoga-rudh), self-mastery is said to be the means of further ascent.

VI-A (2)—PILGRIM ON THE DIVINE PATH.

(Yoga-rudh)

The aspirant gets established on the Divine path only after he has controlled his senses and mental attachments for

and self purification for rising to the status of a Yoga-rudh by practice of Karma Yoga. Thereafter he discovers his True Self to ascend higher and higher in harmony by laying special stress on the practice of self-mastery (Vijit-atma).

VI.A (3)—PRACTICAL METHOD OF SELF-REALISATION

Geeta proceeds to give us in addition to its general method of knowledge and works, a special process of meditation, a powerful method for practice, a strong way to the complete control of mind and its workings.

VI-10. The Lord says that the Yogi should practise constant union with his self sitting apart in a lonely place, controlling his outgoing mental consciousness, and banishing all desires and attachments to possession.

VI-11. He should sit in a spot of pure surroundings on a seat neither too high nor too low, made up of cloth, bear skin, kusha grass arranged inversely one over the other.

VI-12. Thus steadfastly seating himself, diverting his mind in one-pointed concentration, and controlling the way-ward consciousness and senses, the Yogi should practise Yoga for purification of his lower self.

VI-13. He should hold the body, head, and neck erect and motionless, the vision drawn in and fixed on the top of the nose and observing nothing all round.

VI-14. The Yogi should sit firm in Yoga with complete peace of mind, fully determined to tread the Brahman-ward Path and fearless of sense attractions. He should control his mind, concentrate his consciousness on Me and should surrrender himself to Me.

There are some schools of thought, which advocate absolute mortification of mental process. They have nothing to objectively concentrate upon, since their sole aspiration and attention is diverted towards attainment of some indescribable non-existent status. Some enthusiasts go to the length of preaching that a thought concentration on God

self and the lower self is his own enemy (if it fails to accept a guidance of the higher self.)

VI 6. Higher self is the friend of one who has conquered his lower self by his aid. But one who is not in possession or in touch with his higher self, (he) virtually acts as an enemy to his own true self.

To master the lower self by the higher self, the Natural self by the spiritual is the way of man's perfection and liberation. This means a transfer of our allegiance from the separative lower nature to the unitary spiritual nature even while living and acting in this world. He thereby naturally acquires perfect calm not only inwardly but always in the waking state of the mind as well, *i.e.* even when exposed, to grief and pleasure, heat and cold, honour and dishonour etc.

C—FOURTH STAGE OF EQUAL-VISION

VI-7. The Lord says: One who has conquered his lower self and has attained perfect Peace and Calm, finds himself immersed all round in the consciousness of Cosmic-self, unmoved by dualities of Nature like heat or cold, pleasure or pain, honour or dishonour.

VI-8. The Yogi who is satisfied with self-knowledge and Divine wisdom, who is master of his senses and dwells in his secret higher self, treating earth, stone or gold alike, is said to be in Yoga with his higher self.

VI-9. He who is equal in soul and regards impartially a well-wisher, a friend, a neutral, an indifferent, a foe, a relation, saint and even a sinner, is considered to be a distinguished Yogi.

Evolution is a graded experience of a journey on the Divine Path first by the Nature self and then by the spiritual self to the destined Divine goal. They simultaneously obtain experience of the various stages on the Path. The Nature self has to perfect himself by sense control

and self purification for rising to the status of a Yoga-rudh by practice of Karma Yoga. Thereafter he discovers his True Self to ascend higher and higher in harmony by laying special stress on the practice of self-mastery (Vijit-atma).

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VI-13. He should hold the body, head, and neck erect and motionless, the vision drawn in and fixed on the top of the nose and observing nothing all round.

VI-14. The Yogi should sit firm in Yoga with complete peace of mind, fully determined to tread the Brahman-ward Path and fearless of sense attractions. He should control his mind, concentrate his consciousness on Me and should surrender himself to Me.

creates as much bondage as any other worldly thought, or even more Geeta believes in the existence of a Cosmic Personal Divine Its method of concentration lays greatest stress on an absorbing concentration and integral surrender of the whole being to Him, to hasten evolution by His Grace. This method promotes the awakening of higher levels of mental plane, where thought, logic or intellectualising becomes superfluous, and Intuition, Inspiration and even Revealation take their place The Truth is not then conceived by logic, but is directly experienced and visualised Progressing beyond the highest level of mental plane, the aspirant evolves and awakens the supra conscient levels of Buddhic or Supra mental consciousness of Divine Light, Peace, Knowledge, Power and Anand

VI-15 The Lord says that by constant practice of seeking Union with the Higher Self in this manner with control of mind, the Yogi attains the highest Peace of Nirvan that abides in Me

Another speciality of Geeta Yoga lies in the fact that it prohibits austere penances and austere restrictions about food, sleep or other activities of life

VI-16 The Lord says that this Yoga is not for him who eats too much or keeps severe fastings or for him who sleeps too much or gives up sleep.

VI-17 This Yoga which destroys all sorrows, can be attained by one who remains balanced in diet, amusements, sleep, waking and in all other activities of life

Shri Aurovindo says that 'Yukta" is generally interpreted as meaning that all should be moderate, regulated, done in fit measure, and that may be indeed the signficance. But at any rate when the Yoga is attained, all this has to be "Yukta" in another sense, the ordinary sense of the word everywhere else in the Geeta In all states, in waking and sleeping, in food, play and action, the Yogi will then be in Yoga with the Divine, and all will be done by him in the consciousness of the Divine

VI—A (4) EXPERIENCES OF SELF-REALISATION

(Atma-Darshan)

VI-18 (1) A Yogi is said to have succeeded in this Yoga, when liberating himself from all cravings of desire, he establishes his controlled consciousness in his Self exclusively.

VI-19. (2) The controlled consciousness of a Yogi absorbed in union with his Self, remains motionless like an unflickering flame of a lamp in a windless place

VI-20 (3) When the Yogi by practice of this Yoga lifts up his controlled consciousness to higher levels and when he visualises his Nature self as united with his higher spiritual self, then he experiences utmost gratification and bliss within himself

VI-21 (4) When the Yogi by self-realisation experiences an ecstatic delight cognisable by his Buddhic consciousness but not within the reach of sense perception, he does not any longer deviate from this blissful state

VI-22 (5) Having attained this blissful state, he considers no other attainment higher than that By firmly establishing himself in this state he cannot be dislodged from it by even the most poignant afflictions of the world

VI 23 Such mental divorce from contacts of griefs is what is described as Yoga This Yoga must be resolutely practised without yielding to any discouragement or impatience due to delay, difficulty or failure

The self of which a man is generally aware is in fact his separative lower self (Pratyak-Atma), attached to ego, mind and senses His real soul is his Higher Self, which is above the dualities of the world and has no separative consciousness. Lower self is a projection of the same in Nature Its true consciousness gets diffused as a result of its contacts with ego, mind and senses Once this ego-self is purified it is automatically attracted by the Higher Self for union

There is a double process of ascent and descent. By ascent the Nature self is purified and enters the magnetic field of the Higher self There is then the process of descent of Higher-self for union with the lower self This is the happiest experience of an aspirant which has no parallel. Worldly attachments and inflictions have no effect on him

The process of this Yoga is a long one, as the preparatory stage itself takes immense time One should not feel despondent or disappointed, if he finds little progress at first He must patiently and resolutely persist in his practice and lay a strong foundation. The progress is generally subjective and can be perceived only by a natural change in our old tastes and habits When the field is ready by gradual inner change of our nature final fateful hour is bound to suddenly burst up though temporarily in the beginning It is this experience of a temporary nature which makes the life of the Sadhak more impatient and sorrowful in an attempt for its renewal. A persistent practice is necessary to make the experience permanent

VI 24 The Lord thus says that the aspirant should abandon without reserve, all desires arising out of his desire-will, and should perfectly control and regulate the group of senses by mind

VI-25 He should gradually rise above the normal consciousness by the steady hold of Pragya consciousness and establish his mind in his higher self without in the least diverting it to any other thought

VI 26 As often as the wavering and unsteady mind wanders about, so often he should reign and control it and bring it under the influence of his Higher-self

VI—B (1) BRAHMAN REALISATION

(Brahman sthiti)

The Yogi by persistent practice of Yoga not only acquires the consciousness of his higher self, but also universalises

that consciousness from Individual level to Cosmic level. His individualistic consciousness gets transformed into the Unitary Cosmic consciousness and thereby he experiences an ecstatic bliss of Brahman contact, (Brahman sparsh) and becomes a Cosmic Being (Brahman bhut).

VI-27. The Lord says that the Yogi experiences supreme joy when he has developed perfect mental Calm and has quitened his desire nature. He thereby becomes a sinless Universal Being (Brahman-bhut).

VI-28. Thus freed from all stages of sins by constant union with his Self, he happily enjoys the touch of the Cosmic Brahman which is an experience of exceeding bliss.

VI –B (2) EXPERIENCES OF A COSMIC-BEING (Brahman-bhut)

The True Self of a man is the microsmic manifestation of the Cosmic Self. As a result of Self-realisation, the Yogi visualises and experiences his Self as one with the selves of all creatures. He becomes a creature of the spiritual world and experiences spiritual Unity in the world of forms and names.

VI-29. The Yogi attaining union with his Self visualises his Self established in the selves of all multiple beings, and selves of all multiple beings existing in his own Self and thus becomes equal-visioned everywhere.

Later on he dissolves the conception of many individual selves (Jivas) into that of one Universal self and becomes a constant companion enjoying everywhere the play (Lila) of the Lord.

VI-30. The Lord says that he who sees Me everywhere and sees all in Me, to him I am never out of vision, nor is he ever out of my vision.

After attainment of this spiritual status, is it not safer to sit in one's solitude looking out upon the world funda-

mentally existing in the Brahman, but taking no part in it nor moving in it or acting in it ? Should not that be the law or dharma of this spiritual condition ?

The Geeta does not advocate cessation of action in the world even for one who has attained the Brahmic consciousness The world is the manifested field of Divine activity and one who has attained the Divine must cooperate in this Divine action rather more worthily on such realisation. *He begins to visualise the Self-aspect of the multiple* creation, more prominently than the material aspect of Name and Form. For him the world is nothing but the dwelling place of the One in the Many, and he naturally feels inclined to fulfil the Divine plain in this existence by *his* actions *in the* world.

VI-31 The Lord thus says that he adores Me as dwelling *uniformly in all created beings,* he *virtually lives* and acts in Me while acting and working in this world in whatever way.

VI-32. O Arjun, I hold him as the supreme Yogi who experiences all happenings everywhere whether pleasant or painful, equally as if they were of his own self.

Shri Aurovindo says that by this verse it is not meant at *all that the Yogi himself shall fall from the griefless spiritual* bliss, and feel again worldly unhappiness even in the sorrow of others, but seeing in others the play ot the dualities which he himself has left and surmounted. He shall still see all as himself, his self in all, God in all, not disturbed or bewildered by the appearances of these things. He shall be moved by them only to help and heal, to occupy himself with the good of all beings, to lead men to the spiritual bliss, to work for the progress of the world Godwards, and he shall live the Divine life so long as days upon earth are his portion. The God lover who can do this can thus embrace all things in God, can look calmly on the lower

nature and the works of the Maya of the three gunas He acts in the gunas and upon them without perturbation or fall or disturbance from the height and power of the spiritual oneness Free in the largeness of God vision, sweet and great and luminous in the strength of the God-nature, he may well be declared to be supreme Yogi. He indeed has conquered the creation (Jitah-sargo)

VI C (1)—OBSTACLES IN SADHANA AND THE WAY TO GET OVER THEM (VI—33 to 36)

Arjun's mind was too much engrossed to find out an immediate solution of his duty in the battlefield The teachings about the stabilisation of mind appeared impossible for his restless mind to practise He thus puts a direct question to Lord Krishna for solution of this difficulty.

VI-33. Arjun proceeds to say In this process of Yoga which has been so solemnly declared to me by you, I do not see any stable foundation, on account of the restlessness of my nature

VI-34 For, the mind is by nature restless, impetuous, strong and obstinate I find it an uphill task to discipline and control it, like an attempt to resist a storm.

VI-35 The Lord says Undoubtedly the mind is by nature restless and difficult to control But it can be brought under control by persistent practice and non-attachment to sense objects

VI-36 In my opinion, it is difficult to attain success in this Yoga by one who has not controlled his lower self But for one who has brought his lower self under control, it becomes possible to attain success by steadfast devotion and effort

The difficulty of mental control pointed out by Arjun is the difficulty of the desire-mind working as a slave of the senses As long as one lives and acts in this surface mind, he would find it impossible to get over its vibratory condition.

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years, he who has failed to attain success or has fallen from the spiritual heights attained in life time, is again born in the house of such as are pure and blesssed.

VI-42. Or he may be reborn in the family of a Yogi possessed of Divine Wisdom. Such a birth is rarely obtained in this world.

VI-43. In the new birth he is endowed with that evolved Buddhic consciousness which he had developed in previous life. With that heritage as basis he again endeavours to attain perfection by further practice.

VI-44. The accumulated result of past practice in the previous birth, irresistably creates a natural urge in his heart for further evolution. Thus in course of time even an aspirant of the Yoga attains a spiritual experience which is far superior to the mental conceptions of Brahman as described in the scriptures.

Our ancient sages have attempted to describe the experiences of Brahmic consciousness in terms of the human language. But that description in human words falls too inadequate for a true expression of the real spiritual experience. The Vedas are described as Shabda-Brahman because they describe the Brahman experience in human language. For one who has attained direct spiritual experience by practice of Yoga, the verbal description of Brahman in words in Vedas becomes superfluous and secondary. He is therefore said to have crossed the Shabda-Brahman.

VI-45. Thus the Yogi endeavouring assiduously in the pursuit of Yoga, and having purified his sinful lower nature attains the supreme status after passing through manifold births.

Succession of births and deaths thus proves of great utility to an aspirant of Yoga. The evolutionary gains obtained by practice in one birth becomes the basic natural asset for the next birth and stage by stage ultimate success is assured. The efforts made in one life may not bring the

There are subtler levels of mind which are calm, peaceful and silent. If by practice one can learn to live in this higher mental levels, peace and calm will be his natural condition. This is however not possible unless it is accompanied by the psychological practice of detachment from the sense objects, and to the fruit of action. The success may take an indefinitely long time and recurrence of many births. Practice however is bound to make everything perfect. The gain of to-day is an asset for to-morrow. Thus whatever advance one makes in one's life it becomes a natural acquisition in his temperament to start afresh in the next birth.

Arjun puts a direct question to the Lord on this point. Admitting that success in this Yoga can be possibly attained by persistent practice, but the question is that the time required for success is too long for one span of man's life. Arjun, therefore, asks whether such a futile attempt of even the whole life time will not result in the loss of enjoyment both of this world as well as of the worlds beyond ?

VI-37. Arjun says : What is the fate of a man who takes up Yoga with full faith, but being not too assiduous in practice and due to the wandering mind fails to attain success ?

VI-38 Does he not lose both this life of human activity, thought and emotion, and the expired Brahmic-consciousness, and falling from both, do not his efforts perish like a dissolving cloud.

VI-39 O Krishna ! please dispel this doubt of mine for there is none else better than yourself who can destroy its root and branch.

VI-40. The Lord replies saying : O son of Parth ! There is no destruction neither in this world nor in the life to come for him because one who leads a life of righteousness can never tread the path of retrogression.

VI-41. Having attained to the worlds of the righteous after death, and having dwelt there for immemorial

incomplete attainment, until the Yogi himself becomes the Brahman by engrossing love, devotion and surrender to the supreme Divine by Bhakti Yoga. What the Cosmic Divine is in his existence, consciousness and bliss aspects is a mystery of mysteries to an individual however intellectually advanced he may be This intensely secret experience is within the possibility of one who can enter the inner realms of the Divine by wholly interlocking his individuality to Him, effacing it by total surrender, devotion and love It is this that is the closing word of these first six Chapters It contains in itself the seed of the rest of that which still remains unspoken, for it always remains the highest spiritual mystery and the Divine secret

VI-47 The Lord thus says that out of all the Yogis the highest Yogi is in my opinion one who has completely penetrated his inner self in the Divine Self, by intense faith, love and worship

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Thus comes to an end Chapter VI styled as Union by self conquest (Atma Samyam Yoga)

desired result, but they donot become futile or a mere waste of labour and time by death. These verses do not support the popular belief that a man after death has to compulsorily pass through millions of Yonis of vegetable or animal kingdom before taking a human birth One who is on the evolutionary path knows no such retrogression. It is by a long process of Nature's evolution that the Cosmic life principle evolved the inanimate creation into animate animal life and later on evolved mental principle in animate human beings. One who has progressed into a mental being cannot go back to animal stage in animal form. He may possess brute nature and may be born as a brute in human body as a result of evil actions

VI C (2 —GEETA YOGA IS THE SUPREME INTEGRAL YOGA

The Yoga of which the Lord was speaking is not exactly the same as independent approaches by the popularly known Tap-Yoga, Gyan Yoga or Karma-Yoga It is a synthetic integral method of attaining the Divine consciousness. It comprises within it an integration of all the Yogas It starts from the practice of Karma Yoga which terminates in Gyan Yoga which opens in turn the golden portals for entering into the Divine consciousness by Bhakti Yoga It is this integral method which makes the Geeta Yoga superior to other independent Yogas The Geeta, therefore, differentiates the method of this Yoga from that of the others

VI-46. "The Lord says 'The Geeta Yogi is superior to Tap Yogi, and is thought to be greater than even a Gyan-Yogi He is superior even to Karma Yogi and therefore, you (Arjun) should become a Geeta Yogi. O Arjun !"

Karma Yoga and Gyan Yoga are the two stepping stones for the highest realisation of the Divine They indeed take the Yogi to high spiritual attainment of Brahman consciousness To become conscious of Brahman status still remains an

VII-3. Out of thousands of men scarcely any strives to attain perfection, and out of the few successful strivers scarcely any knows Me in all principles of existence (Tatwatah).

What is Gyan and what is Vigyan ?

A Systematised knowledge of ascertained truth is the scientific knowledge (Gyan). It refers to abstract principles as distinguished from their applied result in art. When the scientific laws are exemplified in dealing with concrete phenomena, the abstract theoretical science is converted into applied science (Vigyan) We thus have theoretical mathematics and applied mathematics, theoretical physics and applied physics and so on. This is the dictionary meaning of the terms "Abstract Science" (ज्ञान) and "Applied Science" (विज्ञान).

The Cosmic Divine knowledge (Mahat-Buddhi) is the first Cosmic Divine manifestation in existence. Mythological description of this idea is that Brahma in the beginning of Creation suddenly found himself seated on the top of a lotus stem. He could not know where he was and what the lotus stem was. In order to acquire knowledge of what his status was he descended down the stem to discover its source. He could not trace out the source inspite of years of wandering. He then went into deep contemplation of the Divine for hundred Deva-years. It was then that Brahma acquired the Divine Knowledge and then proceeded to work it out for manifestation of the Cosmic existence.

This knowledge or Gyan is the Supramental wisdom of unitary Divine consciousness which is a normal feature of Mahar Loka. It embodies the idea of the entire process of manifestation of the many aspect of the One. It is an ideative consciousness which conceives how the Universe is to be created, preserved and regenerated. It contains a full scheme of Divine architect about the progress of Creation from the beginning of the Kalpa to its end It can be com-

CHAPTER VII

A (1) DIVINE WISDOM (GYAN) AND ITS WORKING IN EXISTENCE (VIGYAN).

In the preceding six Chapters, the Lord has disclosed the secret of Cosmic Action, the secret of transformation into a Divine Worker by practice of Karma Yoga technique, and also the secret of Divine Wisdom (gyan) by self-realisation. But in order to develop free communion with the Divine and to become cognizant of the Divine Knowledge working out this existence in manifestation, stress has been laid on development of Bhakti Yoga Arjun naturally becomes curious to know the secret of the inner working of the Cosmic existence The Lord promises to disclose to him that knowledge in entirety by means of which he shall realise the Divine integrally in all subjective and objective aspects.

मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः ।
असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥ १ ॥

VII-1. The Lord says: I shall disclose to you how you shall realise Me in entirety and without doubt, by resorting to this Yoga with mind solely attached and surrendered to Me.

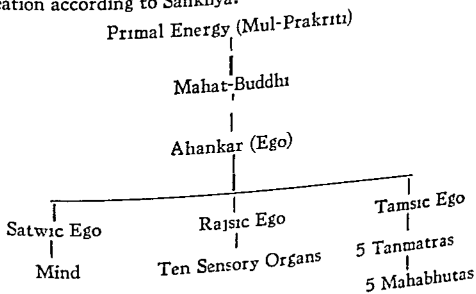
ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः ।
यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥ २ ॥

VII-2. I will disclose to you without reserve and in entirety that Divine Knowledge, both in ideative and applied aspects, by knowing which there would remain nothing more to be known in this world.

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥ ३ ॥

sleep, Kal (Time) and Swabhava (Nature) disturbed the equilibrium of Primal Waters, and there commenced the interaction and commotion of the latent Gunas giving rise to Cosmic Activity. This Cosmic Activity brought in forefront the first Cosmic Element of Mahat-Buddhi or the Cosmic Divine Wisdom. When Rajas and Tamas predominated, the second Element of Ahankar (Ego) came in existence. Satwic Ahankar transformed itself into the third element of Mind. Rajsik Ahankar gave rise to ten sensory organs as instruments for mind to work upon. Tamsik Ahankar gave rise to Objective Nature of five Tan-matras and five Maha-bhutas, for the mind and senses to work upon (Bhagvat II Ch. 4, 6 and III—Ch. 8 & 26).

The following chart gives the process of this Elemental Creation according to Sankhya.



(1) Apara Prakriti (Objective Nature)

Geeta divides these twenty four elements (Tatvas) into eight objective categories :

(1) Solid (2) Liquid (3) Gaseous (4) Electric (5) Etherial	Five Mahabhutas including their qualities, five Tanmatras.

pared to a Blue Print of an architect in its theoretical and ideative aspect, and is the Abstract Divine knowledge by which one realises his self as the selves of all and all selves as the cosmic selves This unitary knowledge is termed as Gyan or Divine Wisdom

It is by this Divine wisdom that Brahma proceeds with the Creation of Existence He works out the ideative Blue Print by means of Divine energy and by practical application of the Divine wisdom (Vigyan) bring into existence the Brahmand and its activity according to plan This practical application of the Divine wisdom in the creative existence is the applied Divine knowledge (Vigyan)

The Lord discloses not only how the Divine exists in spiritual planes but also points out how and through what mediums He descends down and gets involved in every atom of this triple world. This is the applied Divine wisdom (Vigyan) which works out the multiple creation, fundamentally maintaining unitary spiritual principle, even in the midst of diverse conflicting energies of nature. This accounts for the orderly law of determinism of Nature and prevents the Cosmos from becoming a Chaos

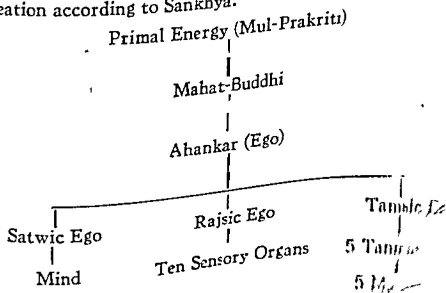
VII A (2) CONSTITUTION OF COSMIC EXISTENCE

How does the Supramental Divine Wisdom emanate the Cosmic Existence out of itself ?

As the mythological version of creation goes, Lord Vishnu after the dissolution of the previous existence in deluge at the end of the last Kalpa, lay resting in Yogic sleep on the coils of residual Cosmic stuff (Shesh) in Primal Waters, with his Consort Laxmi (The Divine Shakti) shampooing his feet, and Kal (Time) silently watching and awaiting the approach of the next World Period with his one thousand hoods spread all over Each hood represented one Dev Year, and at the end of one thousand Deva Years of

sleep, Kal (Time) and Swabhava (Nature) disturbed the equilibrium of Primal Waters, and there commenced the interaction and commotion of the latent Gunas giving rise to Cosmic Activity. This Cosmic Activity brought in forefront the first Cosmic Element of Mahat-Buddhi or the Cosmic Divine Wisdom. When Rajas and Tamas predominated, the second Element of Ahankar (Ego) came in existence. Satwic Ahankar transformed itself into the third element of Mind. Rajsik Ahankar gave rise to ten sensory organs as instruments for mind to work upon. Tamsik Ahankar gave rise to Objective Nature of five Tan-matras and five Maha-bhutas, for the mind and senses to work upon (Bhagvat II Ch. 4, 6 and III—Ch. 8 & 26).

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(6) Mind—including its ten qualities called ten sensory organs
(7) Buddhi
(8) Ahankar

Five Tanmatras are the qualities of the five Maha-Bhutas, and ten senses are the ten qualities of mind. They are the energising agents of mind and Maha-Bhutas, which in their absence are lifeless and inert objective principles. (Jad). These energising agents are the subjective principles, which vivify the eight objective principles for furtherence of Creation.

Matter in the last analysis is converted into Energy or Nature. The eight objective principles or Tatwas are thus reducib'e to primary eight kinds of Nature classified as Apara-Prakriti

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।
अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ ४ ॥

VII-4. The Lord thus says that earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, reason (Buddhi) and ego are the eight-fold different divisions of My Nature. This is the Lower Nature

(2) Para-Prakriti (Spiritual Nature)

The Nature of the Divine Wisdom (Mahat-Buddhi) is both subjective and objective, but both these Natures are inseparable and always co-exist in the multiple Creation. In the ultimate analysis of all that exists, we find that the "All" is separable into "Self" (Spirit) and "Not Self" (Matter). This duality of Spirit and Matter in the multiple existence is not isolated or unrelated. There is a continual relation between them, a continual approach and withdrawal, an identification and repudiation. The connecting link between the two is Jivatma, the Divine Microcosm.

The aforesaid eight objective principles of Lower Nature (Apara-Prakriti) were soul-less and inert principles (Jad), and they could not vivify or interact upon one another to combine or to make molecules and forms for furtherence of Creation It is the infusion of Spiritual Nature (Para-Prakriti) in them which made it possible for this inert objective eight-fold Nature to act and interact upon each other to combine and make multiple forms for furtherence of Creation

This idea is mythologically depicted in Bhagwat (II-Ch 2, 4 & III Ch. 5, 6, 8) It is said that Brahman first created objective principles or stuff of all the Cosmic Planes, but they could not aggregate into molecules or forms for furtherence of creation Brahman then went in meditation of the Divine for hundred Deva-Years The God Vishnu then condescended to permeate the objective principles and energise them to aggregate into molecules and forms It is the Spiritual Nature (Para-Prakriti) of Lord Vishnu that permeated the objective principles resulting in the creation of Multiple Existence

The Cosmic Mahat-Brahman is the plane of Divine Wisdom and is the womb of Creation (Geeta 14-3). It is a plane not only of subjective or spiritual principle but comprises within it the latent eight fold objective Nature as the residual extraction of the preceding world period The objective principles are first revealed in manifestation of the new world period, and constitute Apara-Prakriti (Lower Nature) The spiritual Nature infuses and activates them into multiple kinds of forms and energies. It virtually maintains, creates, dissolves and sustains the entire existence (Dharyate Jagat) It is this Spiritual Nature (Para Prakriti) that manipulates, governs and controls the Cosmic movement of Objective principles, and thus virtually sustains the entire mutable existence (Dharyate or sustains, Jagat or mutable existence) It also carries out the Divine will to become Many, and becomes the microcosmic Divine individual (Jiva

Bhut or individual becoming) as a connecting link between the Cosmic Spirit and Matter.

Shri Aurovindo says that the Supreme Nature (Para-Prakriti) is the infinite, timeless, conscious power of the Self-existent Being, out of which all existences in the Cosmos are manifested, *and come out of timelessness into Time*. But in order to provide a spiritual basis for this manifold universal becoming in the Cosmos, the Supreme Nature formulates itself as the Jiva. To put it otherwise, the eternal multiple Soul of the Purushottama appears as individual spiritual existence in all the forms of the Cosmos. All existences are instinct with the life of the one individual Spirit, all are supported in their personality, actions and forms by the eternal multiplicity of the One Purush.···It is by the unity of this Spiritual Nature that the World is sustained (Yayedam Dharyate Jagat) even as it is that from which it is born with all its becomings (Etad-Yonini-Bhutani-Sarvani), and that also which withdraws the whole world and its existences into itself in the hour of dissolution (Aham kritsnasya jagatah prabhavah pralayah tatha). The unity is the greater truth, the multiplicity is the lesser truth, though both are a truth and neither of them is an *illusion*....The fundamental nature of all is the nature of the Spirit, and only in their lower differential phenomena do they seem to be something else, i.e. to be nature of body, life, mind, reason, ego and senses But these are phenomenal derivatives, they are not the essential truth of our nature and our existence.

The Spiritual Nature (Para-Prakriti) is characteristically unitary in principle. In energising the multiple creation of lower Nature (Apara-Prakriti , it maintains and permeates that Unitary Principle even in the midst of diverse conflicting energies of that Nature. That is how the Spiritual Nature (Para-Prakriti) controls, maintains and sustains an orderly determinism of Nature and prevents the Asuric Nature-forces from running riot, and turning the Cosmos into Chaos. Lord Krishna thus says that his Spiritual

Nature is the main prop by which the orderly Universe is upheld.

The Spiritual Nature and the Objective Nature are both Cosmic Natures of the Virat Purush, (Macrocosmic Divine). In manifestation of the multiple existence, the One wills to become Many, and his Spiritual Nature becomes the microcosmic Jiva, the essential Spiritual Self in man. The Cosmic Divine acts in the multiple beings through this microcosmic Jiva principles.

It is as a result of the combination of Spiritual and Objective Natures that the entire multiple existence comes into being. The subjective principle is thus found involved in the "All", even in the so-called inconscient mineral and atoms. This is the reason why transformation of Lower Nature into Spiritual Nature becomes within the possibilities of man.

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥ ५ ॥

VII-5. The Lord thus says: Also know My other higher Nature by means of which this Universe is upheld, and which becomes the Jiva, O mighty armed.

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।
अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥ ६ ॥

VII-6. Know that all becomings are created out of the womb of these two Natures, but I am the source of the birth and dissolution of the whole world.

A (3)—DIVINE OMNIPRESENCE IN MULTIPLE EXISTENCE.

The entire created existence emanates out of the womb of the spiritual and Object Natures, but it is the Divine Himself who energises this machinery of creation and is the source of all existences. In Chapter XIV-3 the Lord expressly says that

the Cosmic—(Mahat) Brahman is his womb but that it is He who casts seed in it. The two Natures constitute a mere mechanical device for the descent of the Divine in the multiple creation. Spiritual Nature is the conscious driving energy behind the workings of the Lower Nature of ego, mind, life, desire and physical matter. This conscious energy manipulating the entire existence has its source in the Divine. Thus the Divine consciousness runs through and through in all created beings, like a thread in beads of pearls.

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनंजय ।
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ।।७।।

VII-7. The Lord says: There is nothing else in this existence Supreme beyond Me, O Dhananjaya. All that exists here is strung by Me like a thread in beads of pearls.

How does the Divine pervade the multiple existence like a thread in beads of pearls ?

Shri Aurovindo says that this is only an image which we cannot press very far. The pearls are only kept in relation to each other by the thread, and have no other oneness or relation with the pearl string except their dependence on it for this mutual connection Let us go then from the image to that which it images. It is the Supreme Nature of Spirit, the infinite consciou ower of its being, self-conscient, all-conscient, all-wise, which maintains these phenomenal existences in relation to each other, penetrates them, abides in and supports them, and weaves them into the system of its manifestation. This one Supreme power manifests not only in all as the One, but in each as Jiva, the *individual spiritual presence.* It also *manifests as the essence* of all qualities of Nature. These are therefore the concealed spiritual powers behind all phenomena. This highest quality...is rather the inherent one, the fundamental truth

of the Becoming (Bhut), a truth that supports, and gives a Spiritual and Divine significance to all its appearances.

This existence is constituted of the combination of Lower Nature and Spiritual Nature. The Lower Nature brings into being eight categories of Cosmic matter or the Cosmic dust. Solid, liquid, gaseous, electric and etheric matter are the five concrete physical states of objective matter, mind, reason (Buddhi) and ego are the subtler states of mental stuff. All these eight Objective elements or Bhutas contribute to the formation of multiple material forms. The Spiritual Nature (Para-Prakriti) permeates in them with subtle inherent energies, characteristic of each of these eight primary becomings. In short, each of the eight objective principles (Tatwas) of Lower Nature is found to possess behind it its own characteristic qualitative energy or Bhava derived from the Spiritual Nature. It is these qualities that energise the said eight objective elements, in the absence of which qualities, they would appear as dead matter (Jada).

Ten senses are the qualitative Spiritual energies that energise the mind. The five Tanmatras are the Spriritual qualitative energies that energise the five objective becomings (Bhutas). These qualities that animate the objective principles are described as Divine in verses 8 to 11. Their workings appear different characteristically according to the nature of each element. Some appear as mental energies, some as desire and life energies and some as physical energies.

The following is what Shri Aurovindo says in his Essays on Geeta. "Divine himself in his Para-Prakriti is the energy at the basis of the various sensory relations of which, according to the ancient Sankhya system, the ethereal, the radiant, electrie, gaseous, the liquid and the other elemental conditions of matter are the physical medium. The five elemental conditions of matter are the quantitative or material element in the Lower Nature, and are the basis of material forms. The five Tan-matras-taste, touch, scent and the others are the

qualitative elements These Tanmatras are the subtle energies whose action puts the sensory consciousness in relation to the gross forms of matter. They are the basis of all phenomenal knowledge . From the material point of view, matter is the reality and the sensory relations are derivative. But from the spiritual point of view, the truth is the opposite Matter and material media are themselves derivative powers, and at bottom are only concrete ways or conditions in which the workings of the quality of Nature in things manifest themselves to the sensory consciousness of the Jiva The one original and eternal fact is the energy of Nature, the power and quality of being, which so manifests itself to the soul through the senses And what is essential in the senses, most spiritual, most subtle is itself stuff of that etarnal quality and power. But the energy or power of being in Nature is the Divine himself in his Prakriti Each sense in its purity is therefore that Prakriti, each sense is the Divine in his dynamic conscious force. In each case it is the energy of the essential quality on which each of these becomings depends for what it has become That is given as the characteristic sign indicating the presence of the Divine power in their Nature"

The eight fold categories of Nature are the quantitative objective categories The five Tanmatras and the ten kinds of sensory energies (Indriyas) are the subtle qualitative energies that dynamise the said eight objective categories of Lower Nature The qualitative Nature of an object is ordinarily considered as part and parcel of that object although it is the most vital energy that makes that object what it is The qualitative Nature of the eight objective categories is not therefore separately classified as distinct categories of Nature in verse 4. Sweetness and sugar form one object and not two, though in reality they are two An object has no value in the absence of such qualities

An idea of the qualitative energies of Spiritual Nature that energise the various elemental becomings of the physical,

vital and mental planes can be roughly had from the following table :

Planes	Primary Bhutas or Elemental Becomings	Energising quality
Physical (Bhu-Loka)	Solid (Bhumi) Liquid (Aapo) Gaseous (Vayu) Fire (Anil) Ether (Kham)	Smell (gandh) Fluidity (Ras) Touch Radiance (Prabha) Heat Incandescence (Tej) Sound (Shabd)
Vital (Bhuvar-Loka)	Lower mind	Senses of action (Karma-indriyas) 1. Vigour Courage (Paurush) 2. Ascetic hardihood (Tap) 3. Strength (Bal) 4. *Majestic splendour* (Tej) 5. Divine Will (*Kam*) 6. Life (Jivan)
Higher Mental (Swah-Loka)	Higher mind Buddhi Ahankar	Senses of Knowledge 1. Aum *(Pranava)* 2 Pragya (Buddhi) 3. Multiple Divine *individuality* (Jiva)

The Geeta illustrates in verses 8 to 11 how the multiple created beings are strung on the Divine like a thread by the aforesaid energising spiritual qualities and how the same Divine consciousness uniformly runs through and dwells in all that exists in the mental, desire and physical planes. Unless understood in this sense these verses are dogmatic stumbling blocks to the modern intellect, and appear even redundant in this brief philosophical treatise of Geeta. A deep scrutiny reveals their grand relevancy. They speak of the secret spiritual sources of all the mental, vital and physical energies vigorously streaming forth in this multiple creation.

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः ।
प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु ॥ ८ ॥

VII-8. The Lord says : I am fluidity in liquids, Radiance in the Sun and Moon, the Pranava (Aum) the source of Divine Knowledge of the Vedas, sound in ether, and courage and vigour in man.

पुण्यो गन्धः पृथिव्यां च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ ।
जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु ॥ ९ ॥

VII-9. I am pure fragrance in earth, the glow or incandescence in fire, the life principle in all beings, and the sense and mental purity of the ascetics.

बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम् ।
बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ॥ १० ॥

VII-10. Know Me, O Parth, as the eternal seed of all beings. I am the Pragya Wisdom of the wise, and the splendour of the splendorous.

बलं बलवतां चाहं कामरागविवर्जितम् ।
धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥ ११ ॥

VII-11. O Lord of Bharats, I am the might of the mighty devoid of desire and attachment, and I am the desire conducive to the Divine Law of action in all created beings.

A (4)—TRIGUNAS-PSYCHOLOGICAL SOURCE OF MENTAL, VITAL AND PHYSICAL REACTIONS

The working of the aforesaid Spiritual energies in the world is controlled and regulated by three Gunas or qualities of Lower Nature. They also have their origin in the Para-Prakriti (Spiritual Nature) where they exist in a state of latent equilibrium. The ego or separative instinct of lower nature disturb their equilibrium. They then begin to manipulate and regulate the flux of other spiritual energies resulting in the creation of multiple existence.

These subtle triple energies (Gunas) of spiritual origin propell the various activities of ego, mind, senses and body in the creatures in varying degree of intensity depending on the capacities of their constitution. Each of the qualitative energies of spiritual nature has a tremendous force in its free state, which no material object can receive in full intensity. We can imagine the tremendous energies of elements like water, air, heat, electricity etc, which if not kept in control by nature's provision of limited receptive capacity of created beings, would result in the destruction of the whole existence. Nature has equipped the constitution of all created beings with mind, senses and other physical organs possessing limited capacities of reception of these nature forces. If it were not so, man and other created beings would become blind, deaf, insane or what not, by the uncontrolled flux of these cosmic energies.

In India Hat-yoga has invented various physical and breathing devices to enlarge the receptive capacity of physical organs to allow a greater influx of nature forces in the physical body, and thereby to acquire super normal powers known as siddhis. Shri Aurobindo says in the "Synthesis of Yoga"-(Introduction), that Hat-yoga aims at the conquest of the life and the body, whose equilibrium is the foundation of all Nature's working in the human being. Equilibrium established by nature is sufficient for the normal egoistic life;

it is insufficient for the purpose of the Hat-yogi……Hat-yoga seeks to rectify Nature, and establish another equilibrium by which the physical frame will be able to sustain the inrush of an increasing vital or dynamic force of Prana almost infinite in its quantity or intensity. In Nature the equilibrium is based upon the individualisation of a limited quantity and force of the Prana more than that the individual is by personal and hereditary habit unable bear use, or control. In Hat-yoga the equilibrium opens a door to the universalisation of the individual vitality by admitting into the body, containing, using and controlling, in much less fixed and limited action of the universal energy.

A (5)—TRIGUNAS—COSMIC CONTROLS OF NATURE'S FORCES

Nature has provided Cosmic reducing controls to regulate the receptivity of the flux of Cosmic energies in the constitutions of created beings. The extent of limitation of the receptive capacity of the organs of physical embodiments, depends on the proportion of the three Gunas inherently working in the swabhaba or inner nature of a particular becoming. The Gunas thus work as control to regulate the flux of Nature's Forces in the organs of the physical embodiments of the created beings, and thereby play an important role in the smooth running of the multiple creation.

These Cosmic controlling energies called Gunas are of three categories :

1. The Sato-guna controls and regulates the chaotic possibility likely to be created by the free and un-interrupted flow of Nature's Energies It tends to promote and maintain harmony, peace, order, and the evolutionary urge of Spiritual Nature It is a buoyant movement in one's nature, radiating, and reflecting spiritual light.

2. Rajo-guna promotes and energises the flow of Nature's Energies to the full extent of one's capacity. In man it

energises multiple desires and activities within the utmost capacity of the physical organs. It would work havoc if not kept in balance by the co existing controls of Satwik and Tamasic qualities in one's Swabhaba or nature It may be said to promote a head long forward movement of Nature's Forces

3 The third Guna is the Tamo guna or inertia. It tends to create immobility in objects, but different from the harmonising stability of Sato-guna It does not check the flux of Cosmic Energies, but on the other hand it permits their free flow though centrifugally to such a pitch that they begin to concentrate on one point, making it appear stationary and as if devoid of motion An atom is an instance of such concentration of Tamoguna Science has discovered a tremendous concentrated energy involved in an atom which if released would cause vast devastation Tamoguna is predominant in plants and animals In men it results in promoting laziness, indecision, apathy, selfishness, insensibility to blood shed and other cruelties, and many other degenerating immoral tendencies It is an involuntary downward pull of Asuric Nature

These three gunas are inseparable and co exist together though in different proportions in all beings. One of them remains predominant, but its free operation is kept in check by the other two subordinate gunas They thus control each other like a triangle of forces The predominant guna is thus restrained in its free action by the pull of the other two That is the reason why we notice a subordinate concealed instinct of Satoguna even in the worst criminal If developed, this Satwik instinct can in course of time gain predominance in his nature, and can convert him into a saint

These gunas remain latent and inactive in the spiritual planes and do not affect the beings dwelling therein Such beings are said to be living in Trigunatit condition being liberated from their activities In the lower three planes called Triloki they become prominently active and constitute the

natural tendency or swabhaba of each individual and operate as the law of his action. Even his blood cells, nerves, tissues and brain cells are dominated by the predominant guna or quality of his Swabhaba. His total life activities are thus virtually enslaved by that Swabhaba.

If the Satwik quality is predominant, his constitution gets insulated against the rush of Tamasic or Rajsic tendencies Similarly if Rajsic or Tamasic quality is predominant, his body acts as an insulator against the flux of the other two qualities. It is this principle of the diverse balances of these triangular energies, that is responsible for innumerable varieties of natures in men and in other created beings

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।
मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥ १२ ॥

VII-12. The Lord says : You should know that the subtle Satoguna, Rajoguna and Tamoguna emanate from Me, I am not in them but they are in Me.

What is meant here is that the true and supreme spiritual nature of the Divine is not imprisoned in the gunas. The gunas are only phenomena in his being created out of it by the action of the ego and the ignorance. The ignorance presents everything to us in an inverted vision and at least a partially falsified experience.

A (6)—MAYA—VISUAL PERVERSION RESULTING FROM GUNAS

The three gunas in a state of equilibrium in the Unitary Spiritual planes are pure spiritual energies but when they reflect in the triple world of multiplicity, they lose their equilibrium, become free lances, and struggle among themselves each trying to dominate the others. Their activity starts when the individual self (Jiva) descends down from the original unitary consciousness into the separative conscious-

ness of the ego principle. The satwik quality predominantly operates on this Ego-self which assumes a satwik covering of a Causal body. This Causal body (Karan sharir) gets enveloped in the lower satwik principle of mind, in the Rajsic principle of desires and the Tamasic principle of physical matter. The pure individual Divine Self (Jiva) thus gets gradually eclipsed from stage to stage in mental sheath, desire sheath and physical sheath He thus becomes a personality. These and the trigunatmic sheaths disfigure and conceal his pure spirituality, masquerading him in mental, desire and physical garbs like an actor on the world stage.

This is the process of Nature's Law of Involution to envelope the individual self in sheaths after sheaths, with the result that their mental, desire and physical nature obstruct the flow of his true spiritual nature to control and guide his activities in life. Being dominated by the lower nature of the three gunas every object whether animate or inanimate appears quite perverse of what it originally is. This negating principle of perverse illusion resulting from the effects of gunas is described as Maya (Ma or not, and Ya or this) "not this". An aspirant in search of his true self while traversing through his Lower Nature for recovering his true Spiritual Nature, realises that everything in the physical, astral and mental worlds is not the true Brahman. At avery stage of research he cannot help, proclaiming "Not this, not this" (Neti Neti) or "Maya Maya".

The chief energies that bring about this result is the action and interaction of the three gunas, which are solely responsible for the multiple creation out of the One. That is why Maya is said to be constituted of the subtle nature of the three gunas (Tribhir gunai bhavai). Shri Aurovindo says that "this lower nature of the three gunas which creates so false a view of thing and imparts to them an inferior character is a Maya, a power of illusion, by which it is not meant that it is all non-existent or deals with unrealities;

but that bewilders our knowledge, creates false values, envelopes us in ego, mentality, sense, physicality, limited intelligence, and there conceals from us the supreme truth of our existence. This illusive Maya hides from us the Divine that we are, the infinite and imperishable spirit If we could see that the Divine is the real truth of our existence, all else would also change to our vision, assume its true character, and our life and action would acquire the Divine values and move in the law of the Divine Nature"

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

VII-13 The Lord thus says —By the subtle tendencies of the three gunas the whole world gets bewildered and deluded, and is unable to realise Me the eternal imperishable Divine beyond these gunas

A(7) MAYA—THE DIVINE PRINCIPLE OF EXISTENCE

The creative principle of Maya is the Divine energy (Daivi) emanating out of the spiritual nature (Para-Prakriti) It dominates the entire created existence Its main object is to maintain and expand the separative principle of multiplicity It is an energy of cosmic nature practically invincible by personal efforts But it is impossible to regain the true spiritual consciousness without crossing the the domain of this Maya The secret of success lies in complete non cooperation with it and to seek Divine aid for liberation from it by total surrender and devotion to the Divine It must however be noted that the Maya is a positive principle working in the Universe It is not a delusion or a non existing imaginary something. It conceals the underlying truth as an Illusion, and makes the existence appear what it is virtually not Maya is compared to an existent rope which an ignorant person imagines as a snake by illusion The world existence is positive and not a Divine trick or a non-existent non-entity, or the result of some

chronic mental derailment of the brain of humanity as is sometimes supposed. It is inconceivable that the Truth can create or result in a Non-Truth, to misguide and delude the world. As pointed out above, it is only by an approach to the Divine with complete surrender and devotion, that one can cross the domain of Maya, and not by any amount of personal efforts.

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥ १४ ॥

VII-14 The Lord thus says: This is my Divine Maya of the gunas. It is invincible and hard to overcome. Only those can cross beyond it who approach and worship Me and Me alone (Mameva).

B(1) TRANSFORMATION OF TRIGUNATMIC NATURE INTO SPIRITUAL NATURE

The first fourteen verses of Chapter VII deal with the philosophical Truth of Existence. Virtually it is the intrinsic activity of the Spiritual Nature (Para-prakriti) that is working out this multiple creation through its derivative objective Nature. The three gunas activate the objective Nature and conceal the Spiritual Truth from our outer experience. The creation proceeds from the Spiritual Nature which is always at the bottom of the entire terrestrial activity. It is this Spiritual Truth that we have to recover in order to become a true spiritual personality, and to make all our actions flow from the power and will of the Divine within and not from the mental idea or vital desires. But material pragmatic mind has surrendered itself wholly to the attractions and satisfactions of material and sense desires; and finds it difficult to transfer that allegiance to the Divine. The Geeta points out a method suitable to the normal wordly man, which may gradually induce him to transfer his allegiance from worldy attractions and desires to the Divine.

Degenerates —

There are roughly two classes of human beings (1) Degenerates and (2) Virtuous Degenerates consist of men who are under complete domination of lower type of Rajoguno and Tamoguno They are purely selfish, aggressive, ambitious, domineering, aggrandising, cruel, devoid of refined moral sentiments and disposed towards all kinds of sinful acts for satisfaction of their ambitious desires They appear to be beyond redemption for the time being. Infliction of secular punishments by State laws, or visitations of Nature's wrath may bring them round to their senses, but not so much the preachings of religious type, which they evaluate as a gross foolery They even proclaim that search for God is virtually a search of a black cat by a blind man in a dark room where it is not at all. Supernatural powers have no appeal for them, and their sole reliance is on personal efforts

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।
माययापहृतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ॥ १५ ॥

VII 15 The Lord thus says that those bewildered fools who are evil doers, great sinners, devoid of wisdom, and who are surrendered to all sorts of Asuric tendencies, do not care to approach Me

(2) The virtuous :—

There are four types of virtuous human beings differing according to their evolutionary stage.

(a) Arta—The afflicted ·

This type consists of men of asuric nature, who have no faith in supernatural powers and have sole reliance on personal efforts But when they fall a prey to chronic incurable diseases, to frustration, to pennury or to other calamities, and when their personal efforts for relief prove futile, they perforce turn their attention of supernatural powers, and try to grasp at them as a last resort like a straw

by a drowning man. Such calamities thus serve as a liverage to lift them out of the morass of trigunas. They vaguely approach nature gods, utter some mantras and perform some rituals for obtaining the relief. Such approaches to God in course of time become a regular feature of their lives, as prophylectics against possible adversities, and also as cures when faced with such untoward incident. Even an atheist on attaining success through such super-natural aids turn into a confirmed theist.

Such persons lay down a general charge against God that if He is really kind, benevolent, gracious, benign and well-wisher of humanity as is generally preached, why is it that He creates inhuman calamities, sufferings, disappointments and frustrations as snares to catch human beings into their nets to make them unhappy. All these snares are our own creations as a result of our evil deeds and violation of Nature'sLaws. The Divine benevolence and grace lies in the fact that such calamities are utilised by nature as levers to lift up men from the entanglements of Maya, and to drive him to divert his attention from the lower nature of ego, mind and senses to spiritual nature These sufferings are thus Nature's evolutionary devices to turn a worldy man into a good-minded person.

(b) Intellectual seeker after Truth (Jigyasu) :

This type consists of men of inquistive nature. They thoroughly believe in the existence of unseen supernatural powers. Their intellectual curiousity impells them to probe into the philosophical mystery of existence. As seekers of Truth they are in search of great teachers for removal of their various doubts and for leading them on the Divine path. The attempt to transform their lower rajasic and tamasic nature into satwic nature and ultimately into spiritual nature.

(c) Desire driven devotee—Artharthi :

Third type of 'artharthi" consists of men who are endowed with some degree of Satwic and higher Rajasic nature, and possess an urge however small to transform their lower nature into Spiritual Nature. They have a natural tendency to act righteously guided by ethical and state laws, and are on the whole disposed toward virtuous acts Some of these higher type of men feel inclined to perform work of humanitarian and altruistic nature and conduct religious and charitable institution for public good They find a religious justification and moral satisfaction in carrying out such schemes, but with a lurking senses of earning happiness here as well as in the worlds beyond after death. Their efforts for the sake of a return or reward falls within the preparatory stage of Divine bhakti which is a higher attainment. They ignore the secret presence of Divine nature in them, that drives them to such virtuous deeds Their ego therefore takes credit for being virtuous, since they cannot see the Divine hand behind.

(d) Gyani—Man of Spiritual Nature :

This is the highest type of a devotee who has transformed his separative lower nature into the unitary spiritual nature He visualises his self as the selves of all, and all selves as the Divine Self He unites his integral being with the Divine, becomes a divinised personality The gyani realises this Divine status and visualises the omnipresence of the Divine everywhere in all beings, after the lapse of persistent attempts of many births. Such High soul are very rare to find

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ १६ ॥

VII-16 Thus the Lord says: O Arjun, there are four types of righteous persons who turn towards Me with devotion, (1) the afflicated—Arta, (2) seeker of Divine knowledge—Jigyasu, (3) desire-driven virtuous persons—

Artharthı, and (4) those who have realised supramental pragya wisdom—Gyanı

तेषा ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥

VII-17. Out of these four types of devotees, the Gyanı is in constant union with Me and is one pointedly devoted to Me, and he is therefore specially distinguishable Such a gyanı loves Me intensely and I love him equally

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।
आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमा गतिम् ॥ १८ ॥

VII 18. All these four types of bhaktas are in my opinion liberal minded, but gyanı is verily my own Divine Self, because he being in union with Me gets established in the supreme Divine status.

बहूना जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मा प्रपद्यते ।
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभ. ॥ १९ ॥

VII-19. This Divine status in which the gyanı visualises Me as dwelling everywhere in all beings, is attained by him after the lapse of many births. Such high souls are very rare to find

B (2)—WORSHIP OF NATURE GODS AND ITS UTILITY—(VII—20 to 24)

Why does a normal man feel more inclined to worship nature gods and not the Divine directly ?

There is a mystery behind this choice of man The highest instrument which a man has developed is "mind", which is material and needs a concrete form to concentrate upon It is incapable of having any conception of the universal abstract Divine. Geeta says in Ch XII that it is

difficult for an embodied being to concieve any idea of a formless Divine. He cannot thus help resorting to some form for worship. In the process of *manifestation* the unitary spiritual nature diffuses itself into multiple energies. Each such energy is controlled and regulated by its own central conscious power. Human ingenuity has assigned personal forms to them suitable to their characteristic activity. The worshipper of each nature gods in such forms virtually concentrate upon their inherent power rather than on their assumed personality, and thus invoked they bestow the desired results.

Shri Aurobindo refers to the utility of personal god worship in synthesis of yoga as follows, "Tendency of intellect is to conceive God as solely impersonal, and the idea of personal God is conceived as a fiction of the mind. This idea of abstraction is a stumbling block to bhaktas. Unless one is convinced of the existence of personal God, he has nothing to adore or to love or to surrender, and his bhakti is only an uncertain attempt which may ultimately prove to be a chimera, a will of the wasp and a waste of time."

There is another reason for man's choice in favour of worship of nature gods. These nature god-heads are acknowledged and believed to be the bestowers of different kinds of reliefs. The man thus choses that god-head for worship which suits his immediate needs and his nature. Since the nature gods can solve all his difficulties, he does not think of approaching the Divine. Such solutions of difficulty by these god-heads relate to the satisfaction of desires of lower nature and they would rather tend a man to continually remain enchained to the lower maya. He remains enslaved to nature gods because his spiritual wisdom gets eclipsed by worldly attractions and desires. Once he reclaims that wisdom by the *teachings* and company of spiritual masters, he would feel inclined to adore and approach the Divine himself. The worshippers of nature gods attain at the most the planes of those gods on death, but the Divine worshipper attains the Divine himself.

(i) The Divine Grants Desired Fruits Through Nature Gods

The Cosmic Divine works through his spiritual nature in the multiple existence. This spiritual nature diffuses itself in manifestation into multiple energies. Each such energy has behind it its own central conscious power generally known as its devata or god. These nature gods utilise their respective energies in harmoniously carrying on and upholding Cosmic law and order. They drive their powers from the divine nature, the universal shakti or the divine mother. The reliefs that they grant in response to prayers is thus virtually a gift of the divine shakti bestowed through their instrumentality.

This derivative aspect of the powers of nature gods has been illustrated beautifully in a parable in Ken Upanishad. Nature gods Fire, Vayu (Air), Indra and others assembled to gloat over their respective powers on attaining conquest over the asuras. Brahman the Divine appeared in the form of a monstrous Yaksha at a short distance from them. These Gods became curious to know as to who that monstrous being was. Agni God appreached him, and the Yaksha enquired from him as to what power he possessed. Agni (Fire) boasted of his all devouring capacity. The Yaksha placed a straw of grass to test his might, but Agni inspite of best efforts failed to destroy it, and had to return disappointed The Air God (Vayu) then approached the Yaksha, but he too failed to remove a straw of grass even by the utmost intensity of his power, and returned disappointed. Then the God Indra of mind took courage to approach the Yaksha. When he reached the spot, the Yaksha had disappeared, and the Universal Mother Uma was found standing in his place. Indra enquired of her as to who that Yaksha was. Uma replied that it was the Brahman who had appeared in the form of Yaksha to curb the pride of Gods by withdrawing their borrowed powers. He further said that the victory gained by the Gods (Devas) was the result of the power of Brahman utilised by him through them.

difficult for an embodied being to concieve any idea of a formless Divine. He cannot thus help resorting to some form for worship In the process of manifestation the unitary spiritual nature diffuses itself into multiple energies Each such energy is controlled and regulated by its own central conscious power. Human ingenuity has assigned personal forms to them suitable to their characteristic activity. The worshipper of each nature gods in such forms virtually corcentrate upon their inherent power rather than on their assumed personality, and thus invoked they bestow the desired results

Shri Aurobindo refers to the utility of personal god worship in synthesis of yoga as follows, "Tendency of intellect is to conceive God as solely impersonal, and the idea of personal God is conceived as a fiction of the mind. This idea of abstraction is a stumbling block to bhaktas Unless one is convinced of the existence of personal God, he has nothing to adore or to love or to surrender, and his bhakti is only an uncertain attempt which may ultimately prove to be a chimera, a will of the wasp and a waste of time "

There is ancther reason for man's choice in favour of worship of nature gods These nature god-heads are acknowledged and believed to be the bestowers of different kinds of reliefs The man thus choses that god-head for worship which suits his immediate needs and his nature Since the nature gods can solve all his difficulties, he does not think of approaching the Divine. Such solutions of difficulty by these god-heads relate to the satisfaction of desires of lower nature and they would rather tend a man to continually remain enchained to the lower maya. He remains enslaved to nature gods because his spiritual wisdom gets eclipsed by worldly attractions and desires Once he reclaims that wisdom by the teachings and company of spiritual masters, he would feel inclined to adore and approach the Divine himself. The worshippers of nature gods attain at the most the planes of those gods on death, but the Divine worshipper attains the Divine himself

has come to an end, they freed from the delusion of dualities worship Him with intense faith

(iv) Nature gods are mediums for Divine approach

It is the Supreme Nature of the Divine (Para-prakriti), that upholds, maintains and controls the multiple Universe This Diviné shakti has her own agencies to carry on the Cosmic activities, and for energising the eight fold Lower Nature. Nature gods are these agencies working in different planes as heads of various Cosmic energies They derive their power from Divine shakti and are spiritual in Nature Some of them exercise their power solely in the Lower Nature, while others work as connecting links between Higher Nature and Lower Nature This Para-prakriti (Spiritual Nature) virtually carries on the Cosmic adminis-tration through these gods alloting different Cosmic depart-ments to different gods These gods are mere generators of powers, quite indifferent to what we call good or bad, sin or virtue, in their dealings with the Cosmic existence Their power works impartially and without distinction One may utilise it either for virtuous or sinful objects like the electric power which one may utilise for human comforts or for electrocution. That is how man obtains relief to satisfy his selfish ends from them These gods however remain unconcerned about the consequences of the grant of such prayers on his spiritual or moral uplift or downfall

Those who have risen above the dualities of lower Nature, and have liberated themselves from attractions of senses, mind and desires, approach these very gods for leading them on the Divine path That is the reason why a Sadhak generally has his own "Ishta Deva" in India to lead him on the Divine path The worship of nature gods is not thus to be discarded as a bigotted foolery, as some free thinkers do

and that glory and palm of the conquest over which they rejoiced and took pride was in fact the glory and victory of the Brahman.

Thus the success or relief which the worshippers of Nature gods obtain is in fact endowed to them by the Divine shakti, the Universal Mother through the medium of those gods.

(ii) Faith brings success :

It is the intensity of faith in gods that contributes to the fulfilment of desires. It is the Divine shakti that sets up intensity of faith in these worshippers to promote their devotion to their chosen gods by diversion of their minds from materialistic powers and personal efforts to unseen supernatural powers. They develope enormous faith in these gods and resort to various external observances suitable to their nature. With intense faith they perform various rituals and sacrifices of material objects, but not the sacrifices of their lower nature. They on the other hand further degrade their lower nature by resorting to bloodshed of innocent animals in the name of sacrifice.

(iii) Faith is an essential element for Divine attainment.

Intensity of faith is an essential element for elevating oneself to Divine love. The worship of Nature gods developes this quality of faith in a man originally due to vital impulses of desires, but a stage arrives when the worshipper begins to consider more desirable to seek the aid of nature gods for lifting him up to Divine consciousness. The intensity of faith thus developed becomes an important asset in his nature for approaching the Divine. This stage arrives when one begins to feel disgusted from the delusion of dualities and satisfaction of desires which multiply to become source of endless sufferings. Therefore, the Lord says in verse 28 that those men of virtuous deeds in whom sin

(vi) Difference between the highest attainments by Nature god worship and Divine worship

Various nature gods have their abodes in different planes of existence over which they exercise their jurisdiction Ganesh, the god of knowledge, presides over the Buddhic plane, Indra presides over the mental plane, the sense gods of hearing, seeing etc preside over the desire plane, and planetary gods preside over the physical plane. The worshippers devoted to these gods ascend on death to the plane in which their adored god presides. But a devotee of the Divine ascends to the higher spiritual planes, according to the progress they make in their life time This high status can also be attained by those who devote themselves to nature gods with the sole object of receiving their aid for union with the Divine

The aforesaid concepts about the worship of nature gods are described in the Geeta in a nutshell in the following verses.

कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवताः ।

तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥ २० ॥

VII-20. The Lord says —Those persons whose wisdom is eclipsed by multiple desires, approach nature gods, resorting to various rituals suitable to their natures

यो यो या या तनुं भक्त. श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति ।

तस्य तस्याचला श्रद्धा तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥ २१ ॥

VII-21 To such desire driven devotees worshiping nature gods in whatever embodied form, I bestow unswerving faith in those gods.

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते ।

लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव विहितान्हि तान् ॥ २२ ॥

VII 22. Bestowed with that faith, he seeks to worship that god and obtains desired fruits as ordained by Me

(v) Nature gods are worshipped in various form (Tanum)

Nature gods are Cosmic formless beings, but the human mind is incapable of conceiving a formless existence However high may be the flight of his imagination, he cannot but conceive the idea of such a formless being in some aspect of a form Even while meditating on an impersonal all-pervasive God, he extends his imagination to a picture of limitless space full of stars, suns and moons, but this is nothing but a conception of a form Then the question arises as to how to conceive the idea of a formless god to make him an object of worship and devotion

In ancient past, the great seers of India and other places had very artistically invented embodied forms for each Cosmic god corresponding as far as possible to the Divine power that he wields for the working of the Cosmos Even the Sat-chida nand Brahman and His Divine Shakti have been represented in human forms, which bespeak of their Divine aspects and Cosmic principles Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh and their consorts the mental god Indra and various other nature gods, including the deities of planets and several other unseen powers, have been alotted various embodied forms corresponding to the nature of their powers An average man fixes his attention only on their outer embodiments, and devotes himself to that outer form only Even the worshippers of God in human form mentalise that the formless Divine and His Consort the Divine Mother, have really assumed these embodiments in their descent in the manifested existence This assumption is purely due to their ignorance of the essential Divine essence (Bhao) concealed behind those forms A true Bhakta however visualises in these very forms the concealed Supreme Imperishable Divine, working through them in the Universe The Divine however helps both kinds of worshippers in developing their firm faith in the gods they worship, and as a result of that faith he grants them the boons they pray for

is in fact a preliminary step to enable the material mind to transform itself into the Spiritual Consciousness,

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धयः ।
परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥ २४ ॥

VII-24 Thus the Lord says :—The persons devoid of searching intellect devoted to My worship in embodied human form get solely engrossed in the outer form, and mentalise (Manyante) that I the unmanifest Divine have assumed the limitations of an embodied form, losing sight of the existence of My excellent Supreme and imperishable being or essence (Bhao) concealed behind that form

(VIII) TOPICS REFERRED TO IN CHAPTER VII-24 AND IN CHAPTER IX-11 DISTINGUISHED

The idea referred to in Geeta chapter VII-24 and in chapter IX-11 appear to be parallel expressions of the same Divine principle concealed behind the multiple existence. If this is true then why such repetition ?

We must not lose sight of the fact that Chapter VII deals with the detailed working of the Cosmic existence It refers to the two Cosmic natures, Cosmic trigunas, Cosmic nature gods and the worship of the Cosmic Divine It confines itself solely to the Cosmic principles, and does not touch the separative principle working in the multiple individuals Human mind has however reduced the Cosmic imperishable Divine to the limited material consciousness subject to all limitations of a physical form Chapter VII-24 reminds us about the imperishable potentiality of the Divine even if worshipped as an idol or in human form It says that even if such form is assigned to the Divine by the ingenious brain of man for facility of worship, the imperishable Divine essence concealed behind, does not in the least diminish or partly perish in such a form, as a

अन्तवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्भवत्यल्पमेधसाम् ।
देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि ॥ २३ ॥

VII-23 But the fruits obtained by such men of baser intellect are perishable The worshippers of Nature gods ascend to the planes of those god , while the devotees of the Divine attain the Divine Himself.

(vii) Form worship of gods is a step of Divine Worship

The embodeid forms alotted to various Nature-gods and even to the Cosmic Divine by the material brain of men are their symbolic representations in visible physical forms. The material mind finds it convenient to conceive the Cosmic formless gods or the Divine in such physical forms But a man of searching intellect notices behind these artistic forms the true and essential Spiritual Nature which is eternally the same and imperishable even though encaged in the grossest matter It is a mistake to suppose that the Divine essence involved in material forms has *diluted itself or lost* His Supreme eternal potentiality A worshipper of such embodied forms of the Divine as *human Krishna* or Ram must enter deep into the spirit of these forms, and mentalise not only the exterior side of the forms, but must plunge deep into the spirit of Divine essence (Bhao) concealed behind them Such worship in the form of an idol or as an avtar is the true Divine Worship which brings about the desired attainment But if one confines himself to the form and form alone, and finds an aesthetic pleasure only in this or that adornment (Shrangar) or ritual, he remains attached solely to the material But gradually there comes a time for each such devotee, when he crosses over the form stage, and begins to enter into the spiritual essence which already existed behind that form. The idol worship or the worship of avtar is not thus to be discarded as a foolish attempt. It

B (3)—IMPERISHABLE DIVINE ASPECT REMAINS WRAPPED UP BY YOGA MAYA (VII—25 to 28)

Why does the imperishable Divine aspect remains concealed for human experience and vision ?

Trigunatmic Maya :

This is a point relating to the involution of Divine consciousness in the Cosmic existence. There are two hemispheres of the Cosmcs, (i) the higher Spiritual hemisphere (Uttarayan) and (ii) the lower hemisphere of material nature (Dakshinayan). The upper hemisphere consists of the Spiritual planes known as Sat loka, Tap loka, Jan-loka and Mahar-loka In these planes the Divine consciousness remains in totality, the One imperishable Satchidanand consciousness

The lower hemisphere consists of the mental plane (Swah), the vital plane (Bhuvah) and the physical plane (Bhu) The One manifests as Many in these planes under the domination of the separative creative principle generated by the three gunas This separative principle is known as lower Maya of ignorance. The individual self (Jiva) manifests as the ego self in multiple beings, which under the impulse of lower Nature gradually gets enwrapped in Causal body, mental body, desire body and physical body The result is that the original Divine consciousness gets involved in sheaths after sheaths, and cannot be experienced by a human being This creative principle of Involution conceals the Divine truth from our vision with the result that we visualise the world a quite different from what it really is The illusion thus created is due to the trigunatmic principle of Maya working in the lower hemisphere as the lower prakriti

Higher Maya or Yoga Maya (Trigunatit Maya)

There is also the Spiritual Nature working in the higher hemisphere free from the bondages of the three gunas The pure individual Jiva remains eternally one with the Cosmic

result of the normal quality of limitation of matter The worship of the idol does not end with its form, but it developes and infuses in the devotee the subtle imperishable Divine principle concealed behind it Chapter VII 24 thus says that petty minds think of the unmanifest Divine as being limited by manifestation, because they do not realise His Supreme Nature of Being imperishable and most perfect concealed behind

Chapter IX deals with the Involution of the Spirit in the individual multiple creation, and states how the Divine by enveloping Himself in the garbs of nature, emanates the entire multiple creation under the impulse of nature, although He always remains the Lord of Nature which works under His guidance (Mayadhyakshaena) It is this Overlord aspect of the Divine that is dealt with in Chapter IX-11 Although the nature is directly responsible for the creation, it always works in accordance with the Will of its presiding Divine Overlord The Lord thus says that deluded minds ignorant of My Supreme Overlord aspect (Maheshwar) working in the individual creation do not realise My true Divine essence involved in human embodiments

The Divine involved in human body as Jiva does not get limited or subjected to Nature It is the lower ego self that becomes subject to the Lower Nature of ego, mind and senses, but the higher self the pure individual Jiva eternally retains its Divine qualities Chapter XIII 22 elucidates this idea stating that the higher individual self in human body remains a mere witness, a source of consent, upholder of the work of Nature, her enjoyer and her Overlord and even as the higher Cosmic self There is thus no parallel idea running in Chapter VII-24 and in Chapter IX-11, and no question of repetition arises

C (1)—INTEGRAL DIVINE KNOWLEDGE (SAMAGRAM MAM).

(i) The Divine Existence is timeless and spaceless (VII—26)

Space and Time are the relative concepts of the multiple existence in terse When our vision conceives innumerable separate entities in existence, we attempt to co-relate them by the concept of space-distance and measure the gap by the concept of time The vision of our organs of knowledge (Gyanendriya) being limited, we cannot perceive the whole. All that our organs can conceive is only what happens in the present. They have no capacity to perceive the remaining part of the whole, which we call past and future This gives rise to an idea of succession of events as past, present and future. The totality of the whole being concealed from our vision gives rise to the concept of three stages of time described as past, present and future Time and Space are thus the necessary measuring rods to co-relate the multiple creations of the world existence, to satisfy the highest aspirations of the separative mentality, to harmonise, to co-relate and to trace out Unity in Diversity

But the devotee of God who has acquired unitary Spiritual consciousness has the total vision of the whole, and has no utility of the concept of space and time, to acquire knowledge of the events that take place in the Universe from its beginning to end He becomes the Seer of the three states of time, described as 'Trikal Drishta' There is no past or future unknown to him Everything is for him the present The reel of a cinema film contains within it the entire whole, but we can see only that present which passes before us in parts. Our limited organs in like manner visualise only the present and not the remaining part of the Cosmic Reel. So long as one remains confined in Ignorance his vision remains partial and incomplete But the 'Trikal-Drishta' the seer attains Spiritual consciousness and acquires the vision of totality. Shri Aurovindo says that knowledge is

Divine in trigunatit state. When the One wills to become Many this microcosmic Jiva principle comes to the forefront, and becomes a pure individual replete with Divine Wisdom The Divine Will thus gives a start to the creative principle which transforms the one Cosmic Self into multiple selves as pure individuals, though they still continue to remain part and parcel of the One In spite of being an individual, the Jiva in his original state has no separative sense of his existence as distinct from that of the other individual selves

The emergence of the individual selves (Jivas) out of the one Cosmic Divine is brought about by the Spiritual Nature (Para prakriti) which in the course of manifestation becomes the Jiva (Jiva bhutam), Para prakriti is the original creative principle which emanates Many out of the One, and partly disturbs thereby the Supreme Unitary Divine aspect This is described as Trigunatit Yoga-Maya as distinct from the Trigunatmic Lower Maya It tends to maintain the pure individual Jiva in constant Union or Yoga with his Divine Source, and is therefore known as Yoga Maya Kumaras are pure child souls or pure individual jivas, who have a natural pull remain united with the Divine. Kumar is a Spiritual status, which every realized person attains before integrally entering in the Bliss of Divine embrace The imperishable Divine in manifestation thus remains cloaked up by the Yoga Maya, and does not reveal Himself in His true grandeur to the ignorant and bewildered man in this physical plane

नाहं प्रकाश. सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः।
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥ २५ ॥

VII-25 The Lord thus says :—Being wholly enveloped by Yoga Maya, I do not reveal Myself in My true resplendence all over The bewildered ignorant man of this physical plane thus remains ignorant of Myself as an [illegible]rishable unborn Divine

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evolutionary progress towards the True Knowledge of the higher phase of his consciousness It is thus essential first of all to rise above the delusion and bewilderment originating from attachment to dualitie , and to bring to a termination all sinful proclivities of nature Such abneigation of lower sinful nature will result in transforming his attraction of lower nature into the Divine attraction

While the lower self is thus expanding itself in Spiritual Wisdom, it has also to expand its devotion (Bhakti) to the Divine. Equality and vision of Unity once perfectly gained by renouncing the attractions of lower nature, and all embracing bhakti becomes the whole and sole law of the being, and he naturally remains absorbed with firm determination in the divine consciousness alone

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत ।
सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परंतप ॥ २७ ॥

VII 27 Thus the Lord says that all created beings in this existence are led into bewilderment and confusion by the illusion of dualities arising out of desires and wrath.

येषां त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।
ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढव्रताः ॥ २८ ॥

VII-28 But those men of virtuous deeds in whom sin has come to an end, being freed from the illusion of dualities worship Me with a firm vow

C (3)—BHAKTI BRINGS ABOUT INTEGRAL KNOWLEDGE OF COSMIC DIVINE

VII-29, 30 Knowledge of the complicated processes working out the Divine plan of Cosmic creation is an essential part of Divine Knowledge It is however wholly ignored usually by the aspirants of Nirgun Brahman, deriding the dynamic aspect as a fiction and a delusion Integral knowledge is that which includes not only the knowledge of

the inherent power of Divine Consciousness as Timeless and Spaceless. Ignorance is the consciousness of being in succession of Time dwelling in the divisions of Space. Knowledge and Ignorance are two phases of Consciousness, but both real and positive. Man lives in the lower phase of Consciousness, and the continuance of the idea of Space and Time is only an indicatation of his limitation of the Total Knowledge.

वदाहं समतीतानि वर्तमानानि चार्जुन ।
भविष्याणि च भूतानि मां तु वेद न कश्चन ॥ २६ ॥

VII-26. Thus the Lord says :—I know all that was in the past, that is in the present, and that will be in future in relation to the multiple creation (Bhutani), but no one knows Me.

C (2)—IGNORANCE CONCEALS INTEGRAL DIVINE KNOWLEDGE

So long as a man lives in the lower Ignorant phase of his consciousness, he is unable to realise the higher Spiritual Truth of the upper phase of Knowledge. Ego principle in man gives rise to this Ignorance. Identifying himself with the ego, the individual self Jiva fails to realise and lay hold on the Divine omnipresence everywhere He sees only the experiences of dualities, and is constantly occupied with his own separate personality, and its workings and shrinkings. For escape from this vicious circle, the first essential is to get rid of the vital ego, the fire of passion and the tumult of desires of Rajsic nature. This has to be done by steadily developing the satvic impulse in his nature.

It is this ego that drives a man towards attractions and repulsions of sense objects, and gives rise to and lands him in the quagmire of dualities, like sin and virtue, love and hatred, friend and foe etc. He thus fastens himself more and more to the lower nature of Ignorance, and delays his

and explanations of existence, but concerns itself more with its subjective aspect. It, therefore, deals with these Cosmic aspects briefly in verses 29 and 30 of this Chapter, and verses 1 to 5 in Chapter VIII.

जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति ये ।
ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः कृत्स्नमध्यात्मं कर्मचाखिलम् ॥ २६ ॥

VII-29 The Lord says :—Those who strive for liberation from decay and death resorting to Me as their sole refuge, acquire the entire Integral knowledge of Supreme Tat-Brahman, of Cosmic Self Aspect and of the entire Cosmic creative activity.

साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञं च ये विदुः ।
प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मां ते विदुर्युक्तचेतसः ॥ ३० ॥

VII-30 They also come to know Me along with My Adhi-bhut, Adhi-daiva, and Adhi-yagna aspects. With their consciousness centred in Me they retain knowledge of Myself even at the critical moment of their departure.

Thus comes to an end Chapter VII styled as 'Gyan Vigyan Yoga', or Union by means of Divine Knowledge and its practical application in life.

the Static Aspect of the Divine, but also the knowledge of the dynamic Sagun aspect. There is an organised Cosmic administration consisting of different departments in charge of various god-heads. Hindu scriptures speak of various god-heads in charge of different departments, such as the Primal Divine Shakti the Universal Mother, Kumaras, Rishis, Prajapatis, Manus and various gods, Ganesh, Anurudha, Pradyumana, Sankarshan, Indra, Varun, Vayu, Ashwani Kumar, Yama, planetary gods, angels, fairies of land, water, air etc. and even the mountain and river gods.

The major Divine aspects that work out the Cosmic existence are briefly described in Geeta as follows :

(i) Supreme Static Brahman (Purushottam)
(ii) Cosmic self aspect (Adhyatma)
(iii) Cosmic creative activity (Akhil-karma)
(iv) Cosmic objective creative aspect (Adhi-bhuta)
(v) Cosmic subjective aspect of creation (Adhidaiv)
(vi) Cosmic yagna aspect of works and sacrifice (Adhi-yagna)

The devotees who devote themselves to the Divine with total surrender of their being for crossing the domain of births and deaths into the Spiritual Domain, become cognisant of the entire plan and scheme of Divine working of the dynamic Cosmic existence through the Cosmic Nature. They virtually become expert technicians of the Cosmic machinery, and know how to work it smoothly and soundly. Like a skillful technician they know where and when to put the required grade of fuel, which screws or part to be tightened or loosened, which parts to be greased, oiled or cleansed in order to ensure a smooth running without any obstruction or impediment. They thereby attain their destination much quicker than those who are ignorant of this Divine working of the Cosmic machinery, and thus ride on a defective vehicle for their journey towards the desired goal.

Geeta does not linger long in metaphysical abstractions

or Supreme Brahman is the unmanifested static, featureless, and qualityless Divine, One without a second known as Purushottam. Brahman is the manifested existence of the same, which is initially static (Akshar), but potential and latent. As the manifestation proceeds, His potentiality is released resulting in the patent dynamic existence of Kshar-Brahman. Thus Akshar or Nirgun-Brahman, and Kshar or Sagun Brahman are two phases of the One and the same Brahman in manifestation. Lord Krishna speaks as the *manifested Sagun-Brahman, and therefore, points out the* unmanifested Brahman as "That Brahman" (Tat-Brahman). This Tat-Brahman is, therefore, described as the Supreme static Brahman (Aksharam-Brahman Paramam).

(ii) Adhyatma

The Supreme Purushottam Brahman being unmanifest is said to be neither Existence (Sat) nor Non-existence (Asat Satanasat Uchyate). In manifestation He limits Himself and becomes a positive existence (Maryada-Purushottam). His Spiritual or Cosmic Self-Aspect then comes into Being as "Adhyatma" described as "Swa-bhao" (Swa means Self, and Bhao means Being). The Cosmic subjective principle of Atma (Adhyatma) is thus manifested as the Cosmic Soul or Self of all Selves

Shri Aurovindo says "that by 'That Brahman' a phrase which in the Upnishads is more than once used for the Self-existent, as opposed to the phenomenal being, the Geeta intends the Immutable Self-existence, which is the highest self-expression of the Divine, and on whose unalterable eternity all the rest, all that moves and evolves is founded (Aksharam-Paramam) by Adhyatma is meant Swa-bhao, the Spiritual way, and the Law of Being of the Soul in the Supreme Nature." In the Akshar Brahman Status the Self or Atmic principle remains predominently patent, while all the rest is potentially latent and static.

CHAPTER VIII

SUPREME AKSHARA BRAHMAN

A (1)—COSMIC CREATIVE PRINCIPLE (VIII—1 to 4)

VIII-1 to 4 The mystic expressions introduced by the Lord at the end of Chapter VII, naturally kindles an inquisitive mental urge to grasp the underlying concrete idea that they convey. Arjun was a man of highly intellectual and inquisitive nature, and was no exception to the general human thirst for knowledge. He thus specifically puts the following question to the Lord.

किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।
अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥ १ ॥

VIII-1 O Purushottam! what is That Brahman (Tat-Brahma) and what is Karma? What is that which is spoken of as Adhi-bhut, and what is that which is called Adhi-daiva?

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।
प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥ २ ॥

VIII-2 O Madhusudan! who is the Adhi-yagna here lodged in this body? How are You to be realised by a self-controlled man at the time of his departure?

These metaphysical terms are precise indications of the subtle Cosmic principles that work out the manifestation of the Dynamic Existence of multifold creation. They are dealt with in the Geeta in a few cryptic terms, but the terms used are self expressive of their inner sense.

(i) Supreme Static Brahman (Tat-Brahman).

It is necessary to have an idea of what the terms 'Brahman' and "Para-Brahman" indicate. Para-Brahman

by the process of destruction and reconstruction This energy is called Cosmic Kshar Energy. The Unitary Divine principle also works behind this process of transmutation, as a force of co-hesion. Super atoms have thus a tendency to co-here, and form molecules, chemical elements, minerals and other Physical matter This energy of transmutation by destruction for better reconstruction, (Kshar energy) is the source of all material becomings, and is known as Adhi-bhut. Geeta, therefore, says that Adhi-bhut or Objective energy of Nature is the Kshar energy of Transmutation

(v) Adhi-Daiva—The Conscious Knowledge principle of Nature (Gyan-Shakti)

Spiritual Nature develops not only the Objective principle (Dravya-Shakti), but also the Knowledge principle (Gyan-Shakti) in the Cosmic energies All Cosmic energies originating as they do, out of Spiritual Energy for working out and maintaining the multiule existence, are not blind forces, as is sometimes supposed They have each at their back, a Central conscious Knowledge principle, which regulates, controls and maintains Cosmic law and order. We cannot have any conception of the Intelligence displayed by Nature even in the inanimate mineral and plant kingdoms This intelligent working of Nature is attributed to the various god-heads of different Cosmic energies The highest Cosmic God, which is the source and origin of all other Nature gods, is the Cosmic Purush (Virat) This Purush is thus described as Adhi Daiva, or the Cosmic God-head of all Nature gods According to Shri Aurovindo, by Adhi-Daiva is intended the Purush, the Soul in Nature, the Subjective being who observes and enjoys as the objective of His consciousness, all that is in the multiple becomings of His essential existence, worked out here by Karma in Nature

(vi) Adhi-Yagna—Lord of Works and Sacrifice (Kriya-Shakti).

Cosmic Intelligence in Nature works out multifold creation by different permutations and combinations of

(iii) Cosmic Action (Akhil Karma)

The Divine "Swabhao" or Spiritual Nature gradually releases the latent Cosmic creative activity, resulting in the dynamic existence of multiple becomings. The release of this Creative principle out of Adhyatma (Bhut-bhao Udbhao Karo Visarga) is the origin of the emergence of various Cosmic energies of Nature, which tend to contribute towards the creation of 'Many' out of the 'One'. It is, therefore, known as the principle of Universal Karma (Akhil Karma). According to Shri Aurovindo, Karma is the name given to the creative impulse and energy, which looses out things from this first essential Self-becoming, or this Swabhao, and effects, creates, works out under its influence the Cosmic becomings of existences in Prakriti.

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।
भूतभावोद्भवकरो विसर्गः कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥ ३ ॥

VIII-3 The Lord thus says that the Supreme Brahman is immutable. His Self-being (Swabhao) is called Adhyatma. Release of the Creative principle of multiple becomings (Bhut-Bhao) is known as Cosmic action (Akhil-Karma).

(iv) Adhi-Bhut, the objective principle of Nature, (Dravya-Shakti)

The Cosmic Dynamism thus released develops Objective, Subjective and Knowledge principles in Nature, described as Dravya-Shakti, Gyan Shakti and Kriya-Shakti, in Bhagvat Puran. The five Tanmatras were the first to emerge as Objective principles in Nature. They, are subtle material principles having their own super atomic existence. These super atoms under the stress of Nature's involutary process precipitate into the physical atoms. Physical matter is the last stage of such involution. Working behind this transformation of super atoms into physical atoms, there is a Cosmic energy which transmutes one substance into another,

The Lord describes these Cosmic Creative principles in a nutshell.

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम्।
अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥ ४ ॥

VIII-4 The principles of Mutability (Kshar) is Adhi-Bhut or Objective principle of Nature. The Purush is the Adhi-Daiva or Knowledge principle of Nature. O best of embodied beings, I Myself exist as the Lord of sacrifice or as Adhi-Yagna in human body.

A (2)—PREPARATION FOR DIVINE ATTAINMENT ON DEATH (VIII—5, 6 & 7)

What is the answer to the most important last question of Arjun regarding the practical method by which one can remain absorbed in the Divine even at the time of his death ?

Our mental, social, religious and other surroundings influence and shape our thoughts and living. They elevate or degrade our inner being, and are prominently responsible for the frame of our psychological constitution. A great stress is therefore always laid on Satsanga and study of religious literature As a result of life-long practice of this type, there comes about a transformation of lower nature into Spiritual Nature stage by stage. On death the man becomes what he had been thinking or contemplating to become, in his life time.

To quote Shri Aurovindo, what soul in man thinks, contemplates, and acts, that he always becomes. All that he had been, has determined his present birth ; and all that he is, thinks and does in this life up to the moment of his death, will determine what he will become in the worlds beyond, and in lives yet to be. If birth is a becoming, death also is a becoming, not by any means a cessation. The body is abandoned, but the soul goes

Cosmic matter. This process of transformation of one substance into a new substance is the Cosmic principle of sacrifice (Yagna) arising out of the Cosmic energy (Karma). According to Geeta Ch. III-14, 15, it is the Cosmic Brahman which originates Cosmic activity (Karma), which in its turn originates the process of Yagna. Nature elements like rain etc. originate as the result of this process of transmutation (Yagna), and these Nature elements contribute to the production of food, grain etc. Finally from this material Food originate the multiple created beings: Man is thus the finished product of Nature having his original source in the Cosmic Brahman.

This principle of transmutation or Yagna is the Kshar principle of Nature working in the Cosmos to create the Many existence out of the One. It is the result of the Divine Will to become 'Many' in manifestation. Thus the Divine Will, being the source of this principle of mutability (Kshar), is in fact the virtual Master and Experiencer of the Works and Sacrifice (Yagna) of Cosmic Nature. Geeta Ch. IV-32, says that the various kinds of Yagnas have radiated from the mouth of the Brahman. Chapter V-29 says: "I am the Experiencer of all Yagnas." The same idea is repeated in Ch. IX-24 which says, "I am the Experiencer and Master of all Yagnas." In verse 4 of this Chapter the Lord says, "I am Myself Adhi-Yagna here in this body."

This Divine principle of sacrifice working in Nature results in Involution of Spirit into the last stage of mineral, and it then works as an evolutionary force to evolve mineral into plant-kingdom, and plant-kingdom into animal-kingdom. It has evolved life principle in plant and animal worlds, and is responsible for the evolution of Mind principle in Man under the inherent Spiritual urge of transmutation by Yagna. The Divine being at the back of this process of Yagna is described as Adhi-Yagna, dwelling in all the forms of created beings. He is the recipient, enjoyer, and Lord of all Works and Sacrifices.

which an ordinary man of any stage of evolution can practise, even while carrying on his routine duties of daily life. The cardinal principle which the Geeta lays down is the raising of one's consciousness into Spiritual Consciousness, by constant remembrance and surrender to the Divine in the course of his life time. Whatever stage of consciousness, he develops till the time of his death, it becomes an asset for his future birth, and contributes to the formation of his Nature. Gradually he can raise his consciousness step by step, and ultimately attain the Divine Consciousness.

Sat-Sang or good company, Spiritual environments, and constant remembrance of the Ishta-Deva, are the main remedies for such uplift. Constant worship, mental adoration, remembrance and complete surrender of the whole being to the Sagun Divine, even in the forms of Avtars or any other Cosmic Deity, are pointed out as the Master Key of the Cosmic Riddle. By constant practice they become crystalised into a natural habit, and such habit gradually converts Lower Nature into Spiritual Nature, without much straining or special arduous efforts. The Spiritual Nature thus developed will cease to attract a man towards Lower Nature, and will consciously or unconsciously persist in the routine activity of his life even till the time of death. The whole of our life with all its struggles, thus becomes a constant Yoga. Thus the undeviating remembrance of Sagun-Brahman or Avtar at the time of death, results in the attainment of the consciousness of the Adored God.

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयम् ॥ ७ ॥

VIII-7. The Lord thus says :—Therefore at all times remember Me, and carry on the struggle of life, for if you dedicate your mind and intellect in Me, you will undoubtedly attain Me.

on its way. Much then depends on what he is at the critical moment of his departure. But it is not a death-bed remembrance, at variance with or insufficiently prepared by the whole tenure of our life and our past subjectivity, that can have this saving power. The thought of Geeta here is not at par with indulgences and facilities of popular religion. It has nothing in common with the crude fancies that make the "absolution and last unction" of the priest, an edifying "Christian" death, after an unedifying profane life. Nor is the precaution or accident of a death in Sacred Benaras, or holy Ganges, a sufficient machinery of salvation. The Divine on which the mind has to be fixed firmly at the moment of physical death, must have been one, into which the soul was at each moment growing inwardly during the physical life.

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥ ५ ॥

VIII-5 The Lord says :—Whoever leaves his body and departs remembering Me at the time of his end, enters into My Being. There is no room for doubt in this assertion.

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥ ६ ॥

VIII-6 Whosoever at the end abandons his body with a predominant thought fixed upon any form of being, to that form he attains upon which he was at each moment growing inwardly during his physical life.

A (3)—REALISATION OF SAGUN DIVINE (VIII-7).

Geeta does not prescribe for Divine attainment any specialised set-practices, or austere penance or torture of body, senses and mind, beyond the capacity of ordinary human beings to follow. It lays stress on the most practical method

because he is subtler than the last subtlety of which the mind is aware, and because the form of the Divine is beyond our thought."

In order to successfully contemplate on the Supreme Brahman for realisation, the human mind requires the aid of some conception of what He is But any conception of His, accompanied by any flight of imagination, will always prove inadequate for His true expression The Supreme is generally described in contradictory terms, on account of His being both the manifested, as well as the unmanifested dynamic Brahman.

Isha Upanishad describes the Supreme as One unmoving that is swifter than mind That the gods reach not, for it progresses ever in front. That, standing, passes beyond others as they run. That moves and That moves not. That is far and same is near That is within all this, and That also is outside all this It is He that has gone abroad That which is bright, bodiless, without scar of imperfection, without sinews pure, and unpierced by evil The Seer, the Thinker, the One who becomes everywhere, the Self-existent has ordered objects perfectly according to their nature from years sempiternal Geeta describes in similar terms the form of the Supreme Divine which has to be contemplated upon by the seeker for attainment of that Supreme Status.

कविं पुराणमनुशासितारमणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।
सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूपमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् । ६ ॥

VIII-9 The Lord says —This Supreme Divine is the Seer, incalculably Ancient, the Master and Ruler of existences. subtler than the subtlest, the Ordainer and Sustainer of the entire existence, having a form beyond mental conception, refulgent as the Sun and far beyond the darkness of ignorance

A (4)—SUPREME BRAHMAN AND THE WAY TO HIS REALISATION (VIII—8 to 15)

(i) Conception of Supreme Brahman. (VIII—8 to 11)

Realisation of the manifested Brahman both dynamic and static, is pointed out by the Geeta as a necessary step for realisation of the Supreme Brahman. It does not ignore the realisation of Dynamic Brahman (Kshar-Brahman), as some Maya-vadins do. It deals with the realisation of Sagun-Brahman in verses 5 to 7, and then dwells upon the realisation of Supreme Divine. One who has realised the Sagun Brahman by His constant remembrance as laid down in verses 5 and 7, should proceed to realise the Supreme Divine, by undeviating remembrance of that Supreme Status, by further practice for such Union.

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।
परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥ ८ ॥

VIII-8. The Lord says :—O Parth, By further practice of constant contemplation of the Supreme, with undeviating consciousness, the Yogi attains the Status of Supreme Divine Purush, the Purushottam.

(ii) Contemplation of Supreme Brahman. (VIII-9 to 10)

The Supreme Purush is the unmanifested Brahman, static, featureless and ineffable. It is He who extends as Akshar and Kshar existences. With reference to this verse Shri Aurovindo says, "We arrive hereat the first description of the Supreme Purush—the God-head who is even more and greater than *the immutable* (Akshar), *and to whom the* Geeta gives subsequently the name of Purushottam. He too in His timeless eternity is immutable, and far beyond all this manifestation. Here in Time, there dawns on us only the faint glimpses of His Being conveyed through many varied symbols and disguises. Still he is not merely a featureless or indescribable existence. He is indiscernible only

fested aspects. The pure Gyan Yoga method leads to the partial realisation of the Supreme Divine because it ignores His manifested aspect as a delusion of Maya.

Direct realisation of the unmanifested Supreme Brahman is according to Geeta, too difficult for an embodied being to attain, without complementing it with Divine Bhakti In Chapter XII-4, the Lord says that the aspirants of unmanifested Brahman ultimately attain Me (Sagun-Brahman) who is the gateway for approaching the unmanifested. Verse 13 of this Chapter, therefore, lays stress on the death bed remembrance of Sagun Brahman (Mam Anusmaran) along with the contemplation of the unmanifested Static Brahman "Aum", for attaining the Supreme Divine Status Geeta does not discard the Gyan Yoga method, but synthesises it with its own method, by implementing the essential element of Bhakti in it.

According to Shri Aurovindo Geeta describes the last state of the mind of the Yogi in which he passes from life through death to the Supreme Divine existence. Referring to the way pointed out in verses 10 to 13, he says, that 'this is the established Yoga-Way of going, a last offering of the whole being to Eternal, the transcendent. But still that is only a process ; the essential condition is the constant undeviating memory of the Divine even in action and battle, and the turning of the whole act of living into an uninterrupted Yoga-"Nitya-Yoga".

Bearing in mind this distinction of the two methods and their integration by Geeta, we have to grasp the underlying sense behind the verses 8 to 15.

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः।
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥ ११ ॥

VIII-11. The Lord says :—That Supreme Purush who is spoken of as Immutable (Akshar) by the Veda knowers,

प्रयाणकाले मनसाचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।
भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक् स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥ १० ॥

VIII-10. He who thus remembers Him at the time of his death with undeviating mind, equipped with devotion, and drawing his life force in the centre of the two eyebrows by Yogic force, he attains this Supreme Divine Purush

There are some systems of Yoga which differ from the aforesaid system of contemplation laid down by the Geeta. They seek the Supreme Nirgun Divine by means of various practices involving austere penances, pranayam, awakening of Kundalini and Chakras by way of a direct approach to that Supreme Status They ignore as Maya or mental delusion, His manifested Sagun Brahman aspect. These are technical systems of mental abstraction depending solely on personal efforts, rather than on the aid of Divine Grace. The method pointed out by Geeta for such contemplation lays emphasis on realisation of Sagun-Brahman aspect, as a preliminary step for realisation of the Supreme Brahman, by complete surrender and devotion (Bhakti). The devotee is advised to continue the same process of surrender and devotion (Bhakti) to the Supreme Brahman, even if he is the follower of the pure Gyan Yoga method of breath control (Pranayam). The words "Yoga-Balena", (the force of Yoga), in verse 10, and the words 'Yoga-Dharanam" (established in Yoga) in verse 12 definitely relate to the Gyan Yoga method. The words "Anu-Chintayan", (constant remembrance of the Divine), and the words "Bhaktya-Yukto", (engrossed in Divine Love) in verse 10, precisely relate to the psychological method of Geeta-Yoga. Further emphasis is given to the undeviating contemplation and remembrance of the Divine for attainment of the Supreme Status in verses 14 and 15. The Geeta thus integrates the pure Gyan Yoga method with its own method of Bhakti-Yoga, surrender and constant contemplation of the Supreme, for integral realisation of the Supreme Divine, both in His unmanifested and mani-

is in constant union with Me, to him I am easily attainable.

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।
नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥ १५ ॥

VIII-15. These High souls (Mahatma) after attaining Me do not descend down by rebirth in this transient and painful world, but further attain the highest perfection of Supreme Divine Status.

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥ १६ ॥

VIII-16. All planes of existence down from Brahman Loka are subject to the Law of Periodicity of recurring creation and dissolution but for one who has attained Me, there is no recurrence of birth.

The word "Brahma-charyam charanti" in verse 11 needs some elucidation. Broadly speaking it means treading on the Brahman-ward path. Brahma-charya does not connote only the sense of mere continence or chastity, or physical abstinence from sexual act, as is generally supposed. The continence that Brahma-charya contemplates extends to abstinence of any thought about sex or any talk about it. Sex apart, the term Brahma-Charya includes all abstinence from those obstacles that come in the way of Divine contemplation. Mind control, sense control, including the sex control and various other abstinences, constitute only the negative side of Brahma-Charya. The positive side is to keep the mind busy and constantly occupied with the thought about Brahman, the highest Truth. Keeping the mind occupied with Brahman consists in listening and reading what is said about Him, and thoroughly digesting and constantly contemplating about it. One who practises Brahma-charya and all that it implies, develops Tej and Ojas, the Spiritual, moral and intellectual brilliance and power. (From "Mahayogi Shri Aurovindo" by Shri Diwakar)

that in which the strivers after perfection freed from attachment and relish of sense objects, enter ; and to attain whom the aspirants tread the Brahmanward path by self control, I will declare to you that Supreme Status in brief.

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।
मूर्ध्न्याधायात्मनः प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम् ॥ १२ ॥
ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।
यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥ १३ ॥

VIII-12, 13. That Yogi attains the Supreme Divine Status, who departs leaving his body with

(i) Sense openings closed against entry of desires,
(ii) *with controlled mind centred in the heart,*
(iii) with Life force drawn up and settled in the head,
(iv) firmly established in Yogic contemplation,
(v) uttering the sacred syllable "Aum", the One Immutable Brahman, and
(vi) remembering Me, the Cosmic Divine.

This is the method of Divine approach meant for a Gyan Yogi aspiring for the Nirgun Supreme Brahman. The Geeta *repeats a simpler method for attainment of the integral Divine* (including the unmanifested Supreme and the manifested dynamic Sagun and Nirgun Brahman), for those ordinary *persons who have never practised the Gyan Yogic method* of Asan, pranayam etc. Emphasis is laid on the psychological method of constant remembrance, devotion, and surrender *to the Divine for attainment of the same goal* to *which the* Gyan Yogi aspires.

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।
तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥ १४ ॥

VIII-14. Thus Lord says :—He who at every moment remembers Me with undeviating consciousness, and who

It is thus at the end of 432,000,0000 Lunar Years calculated from the beginning of Brahman's day, that the Daily Deluge of three planes of Kshar existence comes about. Then commences Brahman's night of rest for an equally long period of one Kalpa. At the end of the night there is a recurrence of the Day's activity of creation of the deluged lower three planes.

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्यद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।
रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥ १७ ॥

VIII-17. Thus the Lord says that the real knowers of the mystery of Day and Night are they, who know the Day of Brahman equal to one thousand yugas in duration, and His Night also of one thousand yugas duration

अव्यक्ताद्व्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।
रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥ १८ ॥

VIII-18. At the commencement of the Day, the multifold existence comes into being out of the unmanifest, and at the approach of Night, the whole of it gets deluged in the same unmanifest (Avyakta).

भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।
रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥ १९ ॥

VIII-19. This multitude of creatian gradually coming into being during the day, gets helplessly dissolved on the approach of the Night, and again comes into existence on the approach of the Day.

World's age at present in the current Kalpa.

Brahman has already completed fifty years of His life period or 50×360 equal to 18,000 Kalpas of Days and 18,000 Kalpas of Nights from the beginning of creation. At present

B (1)—SUPREME BRAHMAN EXISTENCE

The Lord now proceeds to disclose in brief the highest mysterious Existence of the Supreme Divine in His unmanifested and manifested aspects, as promised in verse 11 The unmanifest Supreme is imperishable and eternally static, though potentially Omnipresent, Omniscient, and Omnipotent In the process of periodical manifestation He appears as the Cosmic Static Brahman (Akshar Brahman) having a limited life-period of hundred years Dynamic Kshar Brahman is then manifested out of the Akshar Brahman, having a limited life period of one Kalpa, equal to one day of Brahman At the end of one Kalpa, the lower three planes of Kshar existence are deluged, but reappear after the lapse of an equal period of one Kalpa of Brahman's night Such recurrence of dissolution and re creation continues on from day to day until the expiry of Brahman's life period of hundred years At the end of hundred years of Brahman's life, both the Akshar and Kshar Brahman existences get deluged into the Supreme unmanifested Brahman for a period of another hundred years, after which a new manifestation again starts Details of Brahman's one day period and hundred years life period are given below

It is on account of this periodical law of recurring creation and dissolution of the manifested existence, that the Lord says in Verse 16 that all planes down from Brahman Loka are subject to dissolution and recreation

Brahman's one day or Kalpa in Lunar Years

Brahman's day is equal to 1000 Chaturyugas

∵	One Chaturyuga	,,	,,	,, 12,000 Deva Years
∴	Brahman's day	,,	,,	,, 12,000,000 Deva Years
∵	One Deva Year	,,	,	,, 360 Lunar Years
∴	Brahman's day	,,	,,	,, 12,000,000×360 or 432,000,0000 Lunar Years

the entire Cosmic activity of Akshar and Kshar existences recommences for a fresh period of hundred years

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।
यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥ २० ॥

VIII-20 The Lord says:—Beyond this formless Cosmic unmanifest Akshar, there is another Supra-Cosmic Being, which *is the unmanifest of the Cosmic unmanifest* This Supreme unmanifest (Purushottam) is Eternal and never gets deluged inspite of the dissolution of all existences of creative becoming

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहुः परमां गतिम् ।
यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥ २१ ॥

VIII 21 That Supreme unmanifest (*Purushottam*) is spoken of as the Supreme Divine Status and is known as the unmanifest Immutable (Avyakta-Akshar). That is My Supreme abode, on attaining which one never returns in the manifested existence

The Supreme unmanifest Purushottam is described here *as Avyakta-Akshar (Unmanifest Immutable), in contrast* with the formless Akshar Purush of the manifested Cosmos, who is subject to periodical returns or recreations after the expiry of hundred years deluge, and who is therefore the Vyakta or *Manifested* Akshar. The Supreme Avyakta Akshar is not subject *to this periodical law of recurrence*

This subtle distinction *between the Cosmic manifested* Akshar (Vyakta Akashar) and the Supreme Avyakta Akshar the unmanifest Purushottam, should be borne in mind for a grasp of the subject of Pralaya dealt with in this chapter

Three kinds of Pralayas

According to *Bhagwat Skanda 12 Ch 4 there are three* kinds of Pralayas (1) Naimitika Pralaya (Causal Deluge),

we are running in the fifth Kalpa of His fiftyfirst year. This is known as Barah Kalpa, because Birah Avtar is said to have materialised fluidy matter into the solid mass of earth. Each Kalpa is divided into 14 divisions called Manvantars Each Manvantar is equal to $71\frac{3}{4}$ Chaturyugas or $337,142,657\frac{1}{2}$ Lunar years. Involution of spirit up to the mineral stage was completed at the end of the sixth Manvantar. With the commencement of the seventh Manvantar, the upward cycle of evolution (Parardha) started its operation. We are running in the seventh Manvantar of Parardha or upward cycle known as Vaivashwat Manvantar. The present Kaliyuga is the 28th Kaliyuga of this Manvantar. A period of 5060 Lunar years of this Kaliyuga has already expired in 1960 A. D. The present time is described with great precision in the hacknejed Sankalpa Verse which runs as follows "Dwitiya Parardhe, Shrí Shwet Barah Kalpe, Vaivashwat Manvantare, Ashta-vinshattame (28th) Kaliyuge, Pratham Charane (First stage)'' etc.

Brahman's life period in Lunar years.

Brahman's Day and Night are equal to 12,000 × 2,000 or 24,000,000 Deva years.

∵ Deva year is equal to 360 Lunar years.

∴ 1 Day and Night of Brahman is equal to 24,000,000 × 360 or 864,000,0000 Lunar years.

One year of Brahman = 864,000,0000 × 360
= 31104,0000,0000 Lunar years.

∴ One hundred years of Brahman = 311,040,000,000,000 Lunar years.

At the end of this period of hundred years of Brahman's life from the beginning of the Creation, the entire Kshar and Akshar existence gets dissolved into the Supreme unmanifest, Brahman then completely retires and rests in the Supreme Brahman for a period of hundred years, at the end of which

Causation, get dissolved in the Spiritual Plane Similarly when an individual crosses the domain of the Law of Karma and Causation by control of mind, senses and body, his Causal body gets dissolved in the Spiritual Domain. He then becomes liberated from recurrence of births, and death to which he was so long helplessly driven by the Law of Causation. This is the Naimitika Pralaya of an individual, which dissolved his Lower Nature into Spiritual Nature.

Jiva's or individual's Prakritika Pralaya.

Liberation from the Lower Nature of mind, senses and body is only a preliminary liberation from births under the stress of the Law of Causation The individual has to further attain higher Cosmic Status of the Cosmic Brahman, and to become one with Him. He has then to dissolve all the eight divisions of Prakriti including ego and Buddhi into the immutable Akshar Brahman. He then rests in the Nirgun Brahman Status till the end of hundred years Brahman's life period. But when the manifestation restarts at the end of hundred years' rest, there is a reappearance of the Cosmic Akshar and Kshar existences. The individual has also to appear again along with it although in the same Nirvan Status, which he had acquired in the last cycle. His position in this Nirvan Status is like an individual point in the Cosmic globe and he has to reappear when that Cosmic globe is again formed. This cannot thus be considered as final liberation. It is the individual's Prakritika Pralaya.

Individual's Atyantika Pralaya or Final Liberation.

This liberation is attainable by intense undeviating devotion to the Supreme. The Nirvan Status of Cosmic Akshar Brahman then no longer remains subject to the law of recurrence, but is transformed into the final Nirvan Status of Purushottam from which there is no such return He then ceases to remain a point in the Cosmic globe but gets merged in the eternal imperishable Supreme Purushottam.

(ii) Prakritika Pralaya (Nature's deluge) and (iii) Atyantic Pralaya (The ultimate final deluge). They are briefly as follows :

(i) Naimitika Pralaya

This is the day's Pralaya of Brahman in which the lower three Cosmic Planes that is Physical, Astral and Mental Planes are dissolved, and even the Buddhic Plane or Mahar Loka is effected to some extent. After the end of the night of one Kalpa these three Planes are reconstituted, and gradually the entire multifold creation comes into being, as a result of the law of Causation. This daily Pralaya is thus known as Naimitika Pralaya (Causal Deluge).

(ii) Prakritika Pralaya.

This Pralaya comes at the end of hundred years of Brahman's life period. The manifested Spirit together with the Lower Nature and Spiritual Nature get deluged in the Supreme Brahman. This Pralaya is therefore known as Prakritika Pralaya.

(iii) Atyantika Pralaya.

This Pralaya relates to the dissolution of an individual's Lower Nature into the Spiritual Nature, and also to the dissolution of both Natures in the Supreme Purushottam. Naimitika and Prakritika Pralaya relate to the deluge of the Cosmic Kshar and Akshar manifestation, while Atyantika Pralaya relates to the Evolutionary Progress of an Individual Jiva by dissolution and transformation of Lower Nature into the Supreme. All that happens in the Cosmic Macro-cosm has a corresponding effect on the Spiritual macrocosm, the Jiva, as shown below.

Individual's Naimitika Pralaya.

In the Cosmic Naimitika Pralaya, Physical, Vital and Mental Planes of Lower Nature governed by the Law of

Brahma's Time of one Day or Kalpa, and to the time of his life period of hundred years, it is an infinitesimal fraction of the Eternal Time. Cosmic Nature is itself busy evolving out matter into Life, Life into Mind, and Mind into Super-Mind, and ultimately into the Divine consciousness Nature takes seven *Kalpas* or one Chain (in terms of Theosophy) to evolve Life out of mineral, and seven Kalpas for evolving life into mind With the appearance of Mind, the mental self in human form comes into being Man being endowed with mind can accelerate the evolutionary progress of Cosmic Nature, or can retard it by choosing to remain involved in the lower animal nature Plant life and animal life was passive to the Nature's evolutionary process, and took the prescribed period of seven Kalpas for evolution from one stage to another. If man also remains passive, he will similarly take seven Kalpas for evolving himself into the next Supra mental Stage But if he helps Nature in evolution, he can cut short the normal period, and attain realisation in a much shorter time If he obstructs the Nature's evolutionary process, he might take more than seven Kalpas for evolution to the next higher stage

Man being gifted with intellect must choose to help the Nature's evolutionary urge The stage of evolution varies from man to man The spiritually advanced person proceeds on the path of Knowledge or Light, that takes him into the Spiritual worlds after death and he no longer remains bound to take birth in this world The less advanced persons however proceed on death by the dark path of Ignorance, and after remaining in the lower dark region of desire and mental planes, are obliged to take rebirth, under the stress of the Law of Karma The pilgrims on the bright path dissolve not only their physical body on death, but also their desire and lower mental body, without leaving a trace of lower mental or desire seed Consequently they proceed onwards to Spiritual Supramental Planes Absolving them-

This is the highest liberation of the Jiva known as his Atyantika Pralaya On attaining this Supreme Divine Abode one has never to return in manifestation as stated in verse 21 This realisation is called Supreme Nirvan Realisation of Brahman (Shantim Nirvan Parmam Mat Sanstham Adi Gachhati (6-15) It is said to have been attained by a very few Jivas in this Kalpa.

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।
यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥ २२ ॥

VIII-22 The Lord thus says :—O Partha, That Supreme Purush (Purushottam) is attainable by intense undeviating devotion. The entire multiple existence abides in Him, and is throughout pervaded by Him.

B(2) RIPE TIME FOR DIVINE ATTAINMENT
(VIII-23 to 27)

Cosmic Naimitika Pralaya does not suddenly appear, but takes aeons or ages for preparation Similarly an individual requires ages and number of births as a preparation to enable him to dissolve his Lower Nature into the Spiritual Nature by individual Naimitika Pralaya. This preparation is made in each birth, and is consolidated on death Progressing gradually from birth to birth, he learns by experience that the mental and sense attractions are great impediments in his Spiritual evolution He then begins to make an attempt to get rid of them, and in course of many births he succeeds in liberating himself from the clutches of the downward pull of Lower Nature He thus transcends the Karmic Law of Causation, and is no more compelled to take birth as a result of past Karmas Thus comes about his Naimitika Pralaya by dissolution of the bondage of the Law of Causation (Nimita)

This process of transformation takes an immensely long time according to our conception of Time. Compared to the

world to the mental world, carrying with him a desire seed or astral atom for the next birth

(1 b) SOUL'S SOJOURN IN HIGHER ASTRAL PLANE (AGNIJYOTI)

The higher gradations of astral plane are purer, finer and happier conditions of existence, which a vicious man cannot attain because his lower nature does not find it congenial to approach it, even if pushed from below by the Invisible Helpers of that plane These higher levels are constituted of superior astral stuff, tending to promote happiness, unity, kindness and unselfish tendencies The souls that approach these levels on death are of persons who had developed sympathy, unselfishness, kindness towards fellow beings, and of those who led a virtuous life and performed some altruistic humanitarian or charitable deeds, even though with the sole object of a return in the shape of name and fame while alive, and of a heavenly life on death On dissolution of the astral body, they carry a desire seed or astral atom necessitating a rebirth The advance soul having no selfish desires or personal attachments to gratify, dissolve their astral body without carrying any desire seed for a rebirth They pass on to the higher mental heavens and thence into the Spiritual levels or planes Thus we find that an undeveloped soul treads the dark smoky subterranean path in the astral world and death, while a developed soul treads the upper Bright Path of joy and knowledge (Agni Jyoti in the same world

(2 a) SOUL'S SOJOURN IN LOWER MENTAL PLANE (RATRI)

There are seven gradations of mental stuff in the mental world The lower three constitute the lower mental sub plane of desire mental and physical mental. The upper four

selves from the downward pull of lower nature, they bring about their Prakritika Deluge

Soul's journey after death

There are seven *Cosmic evolutionary planes in existence* Physical Plane (Bhu-Loka) is the grossest, having seven subtler and subtler gradations of matter from solid to ether Overlapping the physical plane is the second subtle plane of astral desires, having seven sub planes, the lower three being dark and gloomy, and upper four brighter and happy Similarly the mental plane (Swah) has two hemispheres, the lower being gloomy, and the upper happier and brighter The soul of the deceased on death has to pass through the desire plane and then into the mental plane. The vicious are attracted towards the darker regions of astral and mental planes, while the virtuous are attracted towards their bright and happy regions

(1-a)—SOJOURN IN LOWER ASTRAL PLANE (DHUMRA)

The lower gradations of astral plane are constituted of *desire elementals infusing strong downward pull for* quenching the thirst of the deceased to gratify his unsatisfied desires, anger, revenge, hatred, greed, power and various worldly attachments to family and so on An undeveloped soul remains confined to these lower gradations of astral plane, and undergoes intense mental afflictions for lack of a physical body to fulfil those unsatisfied ambitions and desires His abode in the lower regions of astral world is thus one of gloomy or smoky environment (Dhumah) usually denominated as Hell (narak) or Purgatory The soul has to undergo this suffering for longer or shorter periods depending on the intensity of unsatisfied longings and their downward pull There however comes a time, when the soul has to dissolve the desire body, and depart from the astral

worldly attachments, on account of their sole absorption in their ideals. The delight which philosophers, saints, god seekers poets, writers, scientists, altruists and other high class intellectuals, had experienced in their abstract ideals and pursuits while alive, is enhanced thousand times, when they reach the higher mental world on death, after dissolving their physical and astral bodies They find no affinity for the lower mental world, and are naturally attracted towards the higher mental heavens, which they find more congenial to dwell They find themselves surrounded in that sphere by the concrete thought-forms of their most cherished ideals Their abstract thoughts and ideologies formed during their life time, then appear more positive and concrete, which they digest and assimilate in their nature In case they had transcended the lower mental and sense attractions, they form no mental seed for rebirth on dissolution of their mental body This heavenly bliss is described as the period of day of knowledge (Ahah)

(3 a) SOUL'S SOJOURN IN CAUSAL BODY

Dark Fortnight :—

Causal body is the pure personality of the self which in course of time assumes mental personality, desire personality and physical personality It is the Antar Atma which becomes subject to the attractions of lower nature and is compelled by the law of Karma to take births After the dissolution of mental body the soul or the Jiva passes on to his Causal Body (Karan Sharir) Men of Asuric nature having no virtuous deeds to their credit approach their Causal Body in a sleepy unconsciousness state Even those worldly wise men who had performed in their life time some virtuous deeds, but with the sole object of attaining desired fruits in return also approach their Causal Body almost in a semi unconscious state, and after a brief stay return by rebirth to this world Their worldly ambitions not having

gradations constitute the sub-planes of Higher Mind, Intuitional Mind, Inspired Mind, Revelatory Mind and Over Mind. The stuff of the lower mental plane is gross having a natural affinity towards lower desires. Lower mind virtually acts as a slave of desires, and in order to achieve their objectives, it engineers various schemes, devices, contrivances, crooked plans, and ingenious dodges. Thus souls of men of Asuric nature are attracted towards this lower mental plane after dissolution of their astral body. They thus enter into a still darker existence (Ratri) with a disappointed scheming mind, beyond any possibility of satisfying it for lack of a physical body. Though they pass into the mental plane, or they have no capacity to draw out joy out of the upper levels of that plane. They have to remain in a gloomy mental mood because their horrible mental thought-forms hover around them without affording any solace. They are thus described as passing into the dark night of Ignorance (Ratri), after emerging out of the dreadful smoky dark atmosphere of the astral plane.

There is another class of worldly persons, who have some virtuous deeds to their credit, and who were not purely selfish and bloodsucking, but had developed some sentiment of love, kindness, charity and religious nature, though for egoistic satisfaction, find great relief and joy at the sight if the thought forms of their cherished ideals during their stay in the lower heavens. After enjoying this short heavenly bliss as a reward of their good deeds, they have to dissolve their mental body and carry a mental seed necessitating their rebirth.

(2-b) SOUL'S SOJOURN IN HIGHER MENTAL HEAVENS (DAY)

There is another class of advanced human beings who had devoted their lives in Spiritual or highly intellectual pursuits, subordinating or even abolishing their other

and Mahar plane, in which reigns the pure Unitary Satchidananda consciousness. The lower hemisphere consists of the mental, vital and physical planes. Just at the border line of these two hemispheres there is an equitorial line of Ego Principle in which the individual self (Jiva) is represented by his Causal Body or lower self (Pratyaka-Atma). This Ego principle is like a convex lens facing the Spiritual worlds, through which the Unitary Spiritual consciousness, while passing into the lower triple worlds is refracted into unimaginable multiple rays resulting in the multifold creation This Ego principle is the golden gate, which conceals the resplendent glory of the Divine Satchidananda from our vision One who has purified his Ego by control of mind, senses and body, and has awakened his psychic self, acquires the capacity to get the said golden gate opened by Divine Grace, for entry into the Spiritual Planes of the northern hemisphere

He then first enters the Mahar Loka of a Divine Wisdom (Vigyan), where he ripens and absorbs the Spiritual Wisdom, consciously working out multifold creation in the lower hemisphere He becomes cognisant of the dynamic activity of the Brahman in addition to his static status (Brahmanvita). Having acquired Divine knowledge he enters into the upper Spiritual planes of Satchidananda Brahman

This is the progressive march of a Yogi from his individual consciousness into the Cosmic consciousness of Northern Hemisphere (Uttarayana). The idea of these two paths may be better grasped by the following chart. The Bright Path passes through the bright upper levels of each plane, while the dark path passes through the subterranean levels of Ignorance of each plane.

been eliminated, they are attracted downwards to seek their gratification They give less importance to their spiritual advancement on account of the downward pull of their unsatisfied ambitions. They thus enter their Causal Body either absolutely unconscious or partly conscious, on account of their waning interest in spiritual life. This waning interest is compared to the gradual waning night of the moon of dark fortnight (Krishna-Paksha)

(3 b) Sojourn of the virtuous in Causal Body.

Bright Fortnight (Shukla) .—

The state of joyful existence in higher mental heaven is a state of effulgent joy of day light (Ahah). At the end of this heavenly life the advanced spiritual persons dissolve their mental body without leaving a trace of mental seed They then consciously enter their Causal Body and enjoy an indescribable blissful state They progressively develop Divine Wisdom like the waxing moon of bright fortnight.

(4-a) Soul's return by Dark Southern Path (Dakshinayan).

The souls which are less developed and strongly fastened to earthly desires and ambitions, proceed by the dark path to the smoky lower astral world, and the darker regions of the lower mental world They then enter the Causal Body with mental and astral seeds in an unconscious state necessitating their return into the dark southern hemisphere of unpleasant mental and sense cravings by rebirth

(4 b) Soul's entry in Spiritual Northern Hemisphere (Uttarayana)

The Cosmos is spoken of as Brahmanda or an elliptical globe having two hemispheres The upper hemisphere consists of the four spiritual planes named Sat, Tap, Jan,

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः।
प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥ २३ ॥

VIII-23. The Lord thus says :—O gem of Bharats, I will disclose to you that time when the Yogi after death has not to return by rebirth, and also that time when he has to return.

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम्।
तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥ २४ ॥

VIII-24. The knowers of the Divine Wisdom attain the Brahman by afterdeath by treading the Path passing through the planes of flaming fire, of day, of bright fortnight and of northern solstice.

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम्।
तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥ २५ ॥

VIII-25. That Yogi has to return by rebirth, who on death treads the dark Path through the gloomy and smoky astral world, the world of night, the world of dark fortnight, and that of southern solstice. Instead of attaining Divine bliss he attains reflected temporary joy of Lunar light.

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते।
एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययावर्तते पुनः ॥ २६ ॥

VIII-26. These bright and dark paths have been conceived as the world's eternal paths. By one a man is absolved from rebirth, while by the other he gets involved in the recurring chain of births and deaths.

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्योगी मुह्यति कश्चन।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥ २७ ॥

Northern Hemisphere (Uttarayana)			Southern Hemisphere (Dakshinayana)	
Stages of Bright Path	Bright Path	Cosmic Planes	Dark Path	Stages of Dark Path
Satchidananda Brahman	0 ↑	Sat-Loka Tap-Loka Jan-Loka		
Divine Knowledge (Entry in Uttarayana)	0 ↑	Mahar-Loka (Vigyan)		
Bright Fortnight (Shuklah)	0 ↑	E G O Conscious Causal Body		
		Unconscious Causal Body	→ 0	Dark Fortnigut (Krishna)
Day (Ahah)	0 ↑	Higher Mental Heaven	↑ ↓	
		Lower Mental Heaven	0 0 ↑ ↓	Night (Ratri)
Agni Jyoti (Flaming fire)	0 ↑	Higher Astral Plane		
		Lower Astral Plane	0 0 0 ↑ ↓	Smoky Gloomy (Dhumra)
Righteous Persons 0	0 →	Higher Physical		
		Lower Physical	↑ 0 ↓ ←	Vicious Persons 0

This description of the Soul's journey after death is given in mystic and cryptic expressions in the Geeta as follows :

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः ।
प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥ २३ ॥

VIII-23 The Lord thus says —O gem of Bharats, I will disclose to you that time when the Yogi after death has not to return by rebirth, and also that time when he has to return.

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्ल षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् ।
तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥ २४ ॥

VIII-24 The knowers of the Divine Wisdom attain the Brahman by afterdeath by treading the Path passing through the planes of flaming fire, of day, of bright fortnight and of northern solstice.

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम् ।
तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥ २५ ॥

VIII-25 That Yogi has to return by rebirth, who on death treads the dark Path through the gloomy and smoky astral world, the world of night, the world of dark fortnight, and that of southern solstice Instead of attaining Divine bliss he attains reflected temporary joy of Lunar light

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगत शाश्वते मते ।
एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययावर्तते पुनः ॥ २६ ॥

VIII-26 These bright and dark paths have been conceived as the world's eternal paths By one a man is absolved from rebirth, while by the other he gets involved in the recurring chain of births and deaths

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥ २७ ॥

VIII 27 The Yogi cognisant of these paths is never deluded in his onward evolutionary march. Therefore O Arjun you should remain firmly united in this Yoga at all times

Superiority of this knowledge of Geeta Yoga

A Yogi possessed of the knowledge of these paths knows full well how he has to prepare himself gradually from stage to stage for reaching the ultimately the Supreme Brahman after death. Geeta Yoga takes the Yogi progressively from mind to the next evolutionary stage of Supra-mental Vigyan and thence to the Cosmic Sagun Brahman, and finally to the Akshar Brahman and the Supreme Purushottam There are some Yogas which try to lead a pilgrim directly from the physical or vital or mental to the indescribable Nirgun Brahman or to some non existent status, discarding the two natural evolutionary stages of Supra-mental and the dynamic Sagun Brahman, as Maya. That realisation remains partial because it neglects to visualise Divine Omnipresence in the multiple existence The knowledge of the two paths as given in the Geeta deals with the gradual evolution of man from stage to stage and makes it possible the integral realisation of Sagun Brahman, Nirgun Brahman as well as the Purushottam Brahman

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव दानेषु यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।
अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ।। २८ ।

VIII 28 The Yogi becoming cognisant of this mystic knowledge surpasses all meritorious results assigned to the study of Vedas, to performance of sacrifices, penances and other charitable works, and attains the Supreme and Sempiternal Status.

Thus comes to an end Chapter VIII denominated as "Union with Akshar Brahman",

CHAPTER IX

A (1)—MYSTERIOUS SECRET OF DIVINE PERVASION BY INVOLUTION IN THE COSMOS (TATAM-IDAM)

(IX—1, 2 & 3)

The Lord disclosed in Chapter VII & VIII the mystery about the creation, preservation and dissolution of the Cosmic Kshar and Akshar existences. An inquisitive mind now naturally gets curious to know the manner in which the Cosmic Brahman pervades and exists involved in the individual multiple creation. The Lord, therefore, proceeds to disclose this secret in this chapter.

इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥ १ ॥

IX-1. The Lord says :—I will disclose this profound secret of Divine Knowledge to you along with its practical working in the creation (Vigyan), as you are of uncarping, and undoubting appreciative mind. By knowing this mysterious secret, you shall be liberated from the bondage of all evils.

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।
प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् ॥ २ ॥

IX-2. This is pure Master-Wisdom and the Supreme mystery. This imperishable secret being the very law of *the Spiritual* being, is easily workable and verifiable by direct Spiritual experience.

अश्रद्दधानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परंतप ।
अप्राप्य मां निवर्तन्ते मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि ॥ ३ ॥

The following verses deal with this profound mystery, and consequently the explanations may sound terse unless grasped with a searching attentive mind They are paradoxical expressions, which could not be avoided while dealing with two different aspect of Kshar and Akshar existences The various faith mongering creeds urge their adherents to take everything on trust, to believe without question what is written in Revealed Scriptures But the Geeta proclaims man's inherent freedom from all such fetters, and challenges him to verify the truth by practical experience

A(2)—OBJECTIVE PERVASION OF THE DIVINE IN MULTIPLE CREATION (IX—4 to 7)

The Lord now proceeds to disclose the manner in which the Sat-chidananda Brahman pervades this existence of multifold creation His Sat aspect develops His Objective Pervasion in the Universe It extends itself infinitely forming seven planes of the Cosmos, along with their subtle objective stuff as their content The content of Sat, Tap and Jan Lokas is the pure Spiritual stuff, that of Mahar-Loka is the Wisdom stuff, that of the mental plane is the mental stuff, that of the astral plane is the dynamic desire stuff, and that of the physical plane is the subtle physical stuff of Tan Matras and Maha Bhutas This objective stuff of each plane exists in atomic gradations peculiar to the subtlety of that plane All these planes exist in the pervaded Abstract Form of the Divine The Geeta therefore, declares that by the abstract form of the Divine (Avyakta-Murtina) is pervaded the entire existence and that all created beings exist in that pervasion (Matsthani Sarva Bhutani)

Though the Cosmic Brahman creates these planes and their matter, and contains them within His pervasion, still He cannot be said to Cosmically contained in them (Na Cha-

aham Teshu Avasthitah). An architect creates a model or form, but he cannot be said to be contained in that form. Ether statically pervades the world, and air dynamically gushes about in that ether without effecting it. Similarly though the Cosmic Brahman *statically pervades the entire* existence, yet He cannot be said to be effected by, or to be contained within His dynamic pervasion in the Cosmic planes and their matter.

This is the Objective Spatial concept of container and contained with reference to the Objective pervasion of Sat-chidanonda Brahman in Existence. But from the Spiritual point of view, Brahman is One without a second, and the idea of container and contained is devoid of reality, it being merely a mental concept of Duality. Thus it is declared that the multiple created being should not in reality be considered as contained or as existing in the Cosmic Divine, from Spiritual point of view, since both these aspects are inseparably one (Na-ch-matsthani Bhutani).

A(3)—SUBJECTIVE PERVASION OF THE DIVINE AS COSMIC SELF

In spite of the creation of seven planes and their matter in the Cosmos, the creative process could not make further progress, because there was no cementing force to combine the atoms of each plane into aggregates of molecules or forms. The Cosmic Self conscious (Chit) aspect of Sat-chidananda then descended down, and infused consciousness and life energy (Chit-Shakti) into the atoms of each plane, resulting in the creation of multiple forms with involved consciousness and life energy. The mental atoms thereby developed capacity of making thought forms in the mental plane, and the desire atoms developed capacity of making desire and sensual forms in the astral plane. Physical atoms similarly developed capacity of making physical forms

(Bhutas) in the earth plane. The Cosmic Self aspect of Sat-chidananda thus ensouled the matter of each plane by Spiritual Pervasion in the Universe. This descent promoted the creative process through Spiritual and Objective nature presided over by the Cosmic Divine as Lord (Ishwar).

It was thus the Cosmic subjective aspect that virtually took charge of the creation from the objective aspect of Brahman. Multiple creation thus commenced under various Prajapatis of formative Nature. This Cosmic subjective Nature worked out the creation as a Cosmic power, and not as separate power of individual subjective nature (Individual Self). Hovering and brooding over the Cosmic planes, this Cosmic self created elemental forms in mental and vital worlds, and physical forms in the physical world. The descent of Cosmic Life principle then evolved mineral into plant, and plant into animal. The descent of Cosmic mind thereafter evolved animal into man. All these stages of evolution were worked out by the Cosmic Self Pervasion under the stress of Cosmic Nature, without any individual effort on the part of plants or animals. Up to this stage of evolution, the Cosmic self or Vishwatma release the creative impulse for multiple creation through the Spiritual Nature. He thus created life forms and sustained their growth without being himself directly involved or contained within them as conscious separate selves (Nacha aham teshu avastitah).

The Cosmic self is spoken of as the creator preserver and dissolver of the multiple existence. This is virtually a description of the Cosmic self as the Lord of Cosmic Nature, which carries on the entire dynamic activity of the Cosmos, impelled by His will. The Self is static, a mere witness and supporter of the activities of his Cosmic Nature. Considering from this standpoint of the Ishwar aspect of the Lord, the necessary inference would be that He is not directly contained in the multiple becomings, although He is their creator and Preserver as Lord of the

Cosmic Nature. (Bhut Bhratia Na Cha Bhutastho). Plants, animals and other inanimate creations have no expression of Individual volition *Their life is controlled by the will of* Cosmic Nature, *under Group Souls* to gather experience of their particular species to further their evolution.

According to Shri Aurovindo the "Divine pervades the existence by Universal Pervasion and Self Pervasion. The Universal existence is all pervading and infinite, and the self existent *too is all pervading and infinite. But the Self Existent infinity is stable, static, immobile, while the* Universal is an all-pervading movement The Self is One and not many. The Self does not dwell in all these existences or in any of them, that is to say He is not contained by any just as the other here is not contained in any form though all *forms are derived ultimately from the ether. Nor is He contained in or constituted by all exisfences* together, any more than the other *is* contained *in* the mobile extension of the aerial principle or is constituted by the sum of its forms or its forces. But still in the movement also is the Divine. He dwells in the Many as the Lord in each being. Both these relations are true of Him at one and the same time."

The Lord *describes descent of these* objective and *subjective pervasions of the Divine as follows.*

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥ ४ ॥

IX-4 The Lord *says :—By My* Abstract Form (Avyakta Murtina) *is* pervaded *the entire existence, and* all created beings exist in Me, but *I am not contained in* them.

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।
भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥ ५ ॥

IX-5 *Considered* from My Ishwar or Lord aspect connected *with this created* existence(Yogamaishvarwam) all created

beings cannot be said to exist in Me. It is My Self principal (Mamatma) that pervades creating and sustaining the multiple creation but I am not contained in it.

यथाकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगो महान् ।
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय ॥ ६ ॥

IX-6 Just as the dynamic air exists in the etheric pervasion, similarly all created beings can be said to exist in Me or in My Objective and Subjective pervasion.

The Divine as Lord of Nature (Ishwar) withdraws the manifested existence at the end of one Kalpa and releases it for recreation again in the beginning of the next Kalpa.

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम् ।
कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम् ॥ ७ ॥

IX-7 All created beings are dissolved in My Spiritual Nature (Mamkam Prakriti) at the end of one Kalpa, and in the beginning of the next Kalpa I release them again for creation.

A(4)—DIVINE PERVASION AS INDIVIDUAL SELVES BY INVOLUTION (IX- 8 & 9)

Pervasion of the Cosmic Self results in the evolution of life and consciousness in plant and animal kingdoms, but the separative sense of individuality remains almost dormant. The animal has no individual will of his own. His life is controlled and governed by the *common instincts which his* species has in general developed by experience. He is guided in his life's activity by the group soul of his species, and not by any separate individual self of his own. When the group Soul particularly of a pet animal gets sufficiently developed by close contact with man, he *developes an individuality* as distinct and separate from the fellow members of his group

soul. There is then the descent of the individual aspect of the Divine as the *microcosmic self or Jiva, by involution in* Spiritual Nature. Thus commences further evolutionary stage, and by descent of mind, Nature evolves man to discover the Divinity within him by personal effort. This is the third Divine descent of separate individual self in man.

To sum up the mysterious Divine pervasion in the Universe, we find three gradual stages of Divine descent. The first is the objective pervasion of Brahma to constitute the seven planes of existence and their matter. The second descent is that of the subjective Cosmic pervasion of the Chit and Life aspect of Vishnu, resulting in the development life consciousness and forms in created beings The. third descent is that of the Divine pervasion as separate individual selves in men relating to Shiva aspect of Sat-chidananda.

The Cosmic Divine manifests as microcosmic multiple selves by involving Himself in His Spiritual Nature, and multitude of existence comes into being subject to the stress of nature. The Divine, however, is in no way effected by the vagaries of Lower Nature.

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।
भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥ ८ ।

IX-8 The Lord says :—Involving Myself in my Spiritual Nature (Swam Prakriti), I loose forth into various beings of this multitude of existence helplessly subject to the stress of nature.

न च मां तानि कमाणि निबध्नन्ति धनंजय ।
उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु ॥ ९ ॥

IX-9 But I am in no way effected or bound by the activities of Nature, for I remain seated indifferently above and unattached by them.

beings cannot be said to exist in Me. It is My Self principal (Mamatma) that pervades creating and sustaining the multiple creation but I am not contained in it.

यथाकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगो महान् ।
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय ॥ ६ ॥

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blind, and ignores or despises this veiled God Head. ......It does not see God in the Universe, it knows nothing of the Supreme Divinity, who is master of these planes full of various *existences, and who dwells within them.*"

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥ ११ ॥

IX-11 The Lord says :—Deluded minds remain ignorant of Me though lodged in human body, because they are unaware of my Supreme Being as the Over Lord of all existences.

B(1)—HOW TO DISCOVER THE DIVINITY LODGED WITHIN. (IX—12 to 14)

The Divine dwells within us through His microcosmic representative the Individual Self (Jiva). The only way to attain that Divine status is to unite the individual self with the Divine self by complete surrender and devotion. But since the self in man is enveloped by lower nature, his ego, mind and senses adversely operate as impediments in his attempt to evolve out into the Spiritual Nature and Divine consciousness. In order to liberate from the bondage of lower nature he has to enter deep in the purified subtler levels of his inner physical, inner vital and inner mental and thereby to contact His Self and through Him the Cosmic Self. The Lord thus proceeds to describe the natural aptitude of those who live in their Lower Nature and of those who live in their Spiritual Nature.

मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः ।
राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः ॥ १२ ॥

IX-12 The Lord says :—Those living in their Lower Nature are persons who continue to pursue a vain chase after

A(5)—DIVINE AS OVER-LORD OF CREATED EXISTENCE. (MAHESHWAR)

(IX-10 & 11)

The entire creative activity originates from the Spiritual Nature of the Divine. The presiding Deity of the Spiritual Nature is the Ishwar Shakti controlling, regulating and maintaining Nature's dynamism of multiple creation. This Ishwar Shakti is known as the Universal Mother working as delegate of Her Lord, the Cosmic Maheshwar. The Divine and His Spiritual Nature ever remain inseparably united. The Divine though static indirectly controls the creative activity as Over-Lord (Maheshwar) presiding over the dynamism of Nature.

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥ १० ॥

IX-10 The Lord says :—The Cosmic Nature presided over by Me brings forth movable and immovable creation. It is for this purpose that the existence revolves in cycles.

Pervasion of the Divine Over-Lord in creature (Maheshwar) :

The Divine dwells in human bodies as Jiva, witnessing, controlling and sanctioning all activities of Nature, but we remain unaware of Him because our vision remains confined within the range of Lower Nature of ego, mind and senses. Shri Aurovindo says "Mortal mind is bewildered by its ignorant reliance upon veils and appearances. It sees only the outward human body, human mind, human way of living, and catches no liberating glimpse of the Divinity who is lodged in the creature. It ignores the Divinity within itself. and cannot see it in other men. Even though the Divine manifests Himself in the humanity, the human mind is still

Many aspect of the dynamic Brahman and even the individual Jiva existence, as a mental delusion of Maya. They also conceive the impersonal Cosmic Divine pantheistically pervading every where as the Cosmic facet (Vishwato Mukham) of *multifold creation They totally discard the idea of a personal God as illusory*

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ १५ ॥

IX-15 The Lord says —Others seek Me out by sacrifice of knowledge, and worship Me as the "One without a second", though existing in every separate being and some worship Me solely in My Cosmic facet (Vishwato Mukham)

Vedic Karma Yoga Method

This method limits itself to the performance of various material sacrificial processes involving complicated rituals, solely with the object of obtaining wordly enjoyments here and also in heavens after death. It is in fact the Divine who receives such sacrifices by various complicated rituals, and confer desired results

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाहमहमौषधम् ।
मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥ १६ ॥

IX-16 The Lord says —*I am the action of the ritual of the* sacrifice (Yagna), I am the food oblations, I am the sacrificial herbs, I am the mantra chanted in the Yagna, I am butter to inflame the Yagna *fire, I am the flaming fire and also the offerings*

Bhakti Yoga Method

This method lays stress on the worship of the Divine with intense devotion and love Since the mind *is incapable* of conceiving any idea *of Cosmic* abstract pervasive Divine, man conceives Him in a personal form He traces personal

false enchanting hopes, actions and worldly wisdom They being devoid of Truth consciousness take resort to acts of demonic and asuric nature

महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवा प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।
भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

IX-13 But those high advanced souls who resort to My Spiritual Nature, worship Me with unswerving mind realising Me as the imperishable source of created existence

सततं कीर्तयन्तो मा यतन्तश्च दृढ़व्रता. ।
नमस्यन्तश्च मा भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥ १४ ॥

IX 14 Striving with firm determination, constantly chanting and singing My praises, and bowing and prostrating to Me with devotion, they ever remain in union with Me by such worship

B(2)—DIFFERENT METHODS OF DIVINE ADORATION (IX—15 to 19)

There are diverse philosphical ideas prescribing different methods for approaching the same Divine goal The most prominent of them are .

(i) The method of pure Gyan yogis seeking Nirgun Brahman realisation

(ii) The method of vedic Karma Yogis seeking worldly happiness and enjoyment of heavens

(iii) The method of Bhakta Yogis seeking personal relation and identity with the personal Sagun Divine.

Gyan Yoga method :

The Advait Gyanis lay stress solely on the Supreme Brahman, the "One without a second", discarding the

Many aspect of the dynamic Brahman and even the individual Jiva existence, as a mental delusion of Maya. They also conceive the impersonal Cosmic Divine pantheistically pervading every where as the Cosmic facet (Vishwato Mukham) of multifold creation. They totally discard the idea of a personal God as illusory.

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ १५ ॥

IX-15 The Lord says :—Others seek Me out by sacrifice of knowledge, and worship Me as the "One without a second", though existing in every separate being and some worship Me solely in My Cosmic facet (Vishwato Mukham).

Vedic Karma Yoga Method :

This method limits itself to the performance of various material sacrificial processes involving complicated rituals, solely with the object of obtaining wordly enjoyments here and also in heavens after death. It is in fact the Divine who receives such sacrifices by various complicated rituals, and confer desired results.

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाहमहमौषधम् ।
मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥ १६ ॥

IX-16 The Lord says :—I am the action of the ritual of the sacrifice (Yagna), I am the food oblations, I am the sacrificial herbs, I am the mantra chanted in the Yagna, I am butter to inflame the Yagna fire, I am the flaming fire and also the offerings.

Bhakti Yoga Method :

This method lays stress on the worship of the Divine with intense devotion and love. Since the mind is incapable of conceiving any idea of Cosmic abstract pervasive Divine, man conceives Him in a personal form. He traces personal

relationship with Him. Some worship Him as father, some as mother, some as son, some as husband and some as master and so on They thus develop intimate attachment and love for such personal God. Some worship the Divine as personified Cosmic power. Divine Wisdom is worshipped as personified Vedas, Sun God as the supplier of heat rain god as the supplier and witholder of rain. In its Cosmic aspect the Divine is worshipped as the Ultimate Goal, the Upholder of the Cosmos, the Lord of existence, witness of the Cosmic activity, Ultimate abode and shelter, the dissolver of existence and its Creator, and as the imperishable seed of creation. He is also worshipped as the bestower of immortality and death, and as existent and non-existent. Our approach to Him with intense faith and love in any form of relationship is not thus an illusory attempt. (Tohi Mohi Nate Anek Maniye Jo Bhave). This is a prayer of the Divine to accept our worship in any of these forms of relationship.

पिताहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।
वेद्यं पवित्रमोंकार ऋक्साम यजुरेव च ॥ १७ ॥

IX-17. The Lord thus says :—To such worshippers I am the Universal Father, Mother, Supporter of existence, the Grand Father, the Pure Knowable Aumkar, and the Divine Wisdom personified as Rig Veda, Sam Veda and Yajur Veda.

गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत् ।
प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥ १८ ॥

IX-18. I am the goal, the upholder of the Cosmos, the Lord of existence. Cosmic observer, ultimate abode and shelter of devotees, the benignant lover, the Creator and Destroyer of existences, the lost resort, the imperishable seed of Creation and the eternal resting place.

तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च ।
अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन ॥ १९ ॥

IX-19. O Arjun, I am the heat energy of the Sun, the rain-god, supplier and witholder of rain I am the bestower of Immortality to God-seekers, and of faith to man involved in lower nature I am the maintainer and dissolver of existence, the existent and non-existent Brahman

B (3)—WORSHIP OF THE DIVINE FOR FULFILMENT OF DESIRES. (IX—20 & 21)

There are persons who though still subjected to the worldly attractions of mind and senses, have some Spiritual awakening in their Nature. They make no attempt to disentangle themselves from the meshes of lower mind and desires, but try to strengthen their grip by seeking super-natural aids of nature gods Their prayers are directed more for satisfaction of desires or for relief of their temporal misfortunes and sufferings, than for their Spiritual uplift. They perform various material Sacrifices (Yagna) of complicated rituals, for securing worldly enjoyments here in life and heavenly enjoyments after death They are men above the degraded type of humanity, and are ethical in their behaviour, kind, charitable, altruistic and godminded, but not at the sacrifice of their personal interest whenever it comes in clash with these higher activities As a result of such virtuous deeds they go to lower heaven on death, where they experience heavenly enjoyments by way of reward But when the limit of such reward of virtuous deeds is reached, they have to return to this mortal world

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते ।
ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोकमश्नन्ति दिव्यान्दिवि देवभोगान् ॥ २० ॥

IX-20 The Lord thus says —Knowers of the triple vedas, drinkers of soma wine, purified of sins, worshipping Me

with sacrifice, pray for attainment of heaven. As a result of their righteous deeds they ascend to the plane of God Indra, and experience in heaven glorious enjoyments of gods.

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।
एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥ २१ ॥

IX-21. Having enjoyed the bliss of the magnificient heaven, and having exhausted the fruits of their righteous deeds they return to this mortal world. Thus resorting to the triple Law of action of mind, desire and body, such desire-driven persons follow the cycle of birth and death.

B (4)—SUPREME WAY OF DIVINE WORSHIP

(IX—22)

These desire-driven persons though purified of lower nature resort to the Vedic Yagnas involving complicated rituals, with the sole object of making the best of this world while living, and of the worlds beyond after death. They try to kill two birds with one stone, but are sadly disappointed since they are thrown back in this world of myseries after a short lapse of heavenly enjoyment.

There is however a superior method which satisfies both these aims, of a happy life in this world, and a blissful Union with the Divine with no possibility of return to this miserable mortal world after death If one unswervingly concentrates his mind with intense devotion and love on the Divine, discarding all leanings towards worldly desires, the Lord himself takes charge of his entire being. The Divine himself assumes the responsibility of looking after his Spiritual and temporal well-being. Just as a mother takes full responsibility for the well-being of her helpless child, similarly when

a devotee surrenders his entire being to the Divine, caring nothing for his personal well-being, the Divine is himself obliged to take charge of his temporal and Spiritual uplift. This however depends on the intensity of his surrender and dependence on the Divine Will. There are many genuine cases of devotees, who have been mysteriously extricated from serious dangers, and have received help from unexpected quarters at crucial moments of utter helplessness. A devotee begins to watch the working of the mysterious Divine Hand behind the veil, even in details of his daily life, and thereby gathers more and more momentum in his devotion with heart's joy emerging out in thankfulness and love.

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥ २२ ।

IX-22. The Lord says :—Those persons who devote themselves to Me with unswerving remembrance, and who thus remain in constant union with Me, to such persons I bestow full security and look after their entire well-being.

C (1)—DEVELOPMENT OF BHAKTI OF THE DIVINE THROUGH THE WORSHIP OF NATURE GODS.

(IX—23 & 24)

An average man even though virtuous and God-minded has a natural downward pull of mental and sensual desires lurking behind. This pull results in depression and disappointment of the devotee, and upsets his Spiritual march. He, therefore, runs after nature gods in the hope of getting immediate relief. He takes to the various ceremonial rituals and material Yagnas to please his cherished god. Nature god worship thus introduces a habit of devotion, love and self giving. This Spiritual seeds though arising out of selfish motives and desires in the beginning, developed later

on into Divine aspiration through the medium of nature-gods, as Ishta Deva. The ceremonial worship and the Yagnas performed to pacify these nature gods *indirectly* reach the Divine Himself, who is the Lord and enjoyer of all Yagnas. The nature god thus becomes the medium for Divine approach

येऽप्यन्यदेवता भक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः ।
तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ २३ ॥

IX-23. The Lord thus says,—Even those who perform sacrifices (Yajante) to other god heads with devotion and faith, they virtually offer their sacrifice to Me, though not strictly in accordance with the true spirit of their performance

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।
न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते ॥ २४ ॥

IX-24. It is I Myself who is virtually the enjoyer and the Lord of all sacrifices, but they do not know Me and My Yagna in their true principles and hence they fall.

C (2)—DESTINY OF NATURE GOD WORSHIP BY DESIRE-DRIVEN PERSONS. (IX-25)

Unless one makes his chosen Nature-god a medium for Divine approach, his worship for satisfaction of personal ends carries him no further in his Spiritual Path. On the other hand, it keeps him confined to Lower Nature, which attracts him down in the mortal world again and again after death. The sum and substance of the nature of life's activities constitutes a man's Swabhao or inner nature of his next birth. It is the engrossing thought at the time of

death, that becomes the natural tendency of a man in the conduct of his life in next birth If he was engrossed solely in his desire thoughts, and worshipped Nature gods for their satisfaction he on death reaches the plane of those gods (Yanti Deva Vrata Devan) If he was a hero worshipper, adoring bravery, patriotism sacrifice of life for country, religion or other virtuous causes by the ancestors of his family country or race, he attains on death to the planes of those ancestors in the spirit world (Pitran Yanti Pitra Vrata)

If he devoted his life in pursuit of lower propensities of nature seeking the aid of lower Elemental spirits, he on death reaches the lower Astral plane of such spirits (Bhutani Yanti Bhutejya) But if he had developed devotion and surrender to the Divine, he on death approaches the Divine Himself Thus the sole moto of Nature-god worship should be to make him a medium or 'Ishta Deva' for Divine approach

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान्पितॄन्यान्ति पितृव्रता ।
भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् ॥ २५ ॥

IX-25 The Lord says —Worshippers of Nature gods go on death to the plane of those gods Those who had been adoring their ancestors, as hero worship go on death to the plane of those ancestors Those who adore elemental Nature spirits, go to the lower astral plane of those spirits Those who devote their life in my worship, come to Me

C (3) SURRENDER IS THE SUPREME WAY OF DIVINE WORSHIP (IX 26 to 28)

Surrender is the main prop on which Divine worship rests It includes surrender of the entire being including

ego, mind, sense and body Even the pettiest details of life are to be considered as offerings to the Divine. To begin with one can learn to offer whatever little he can, with sincere love and devotion, without any idea of a suitable return in bargain. Shri Aurovindo says, "the least, the sligthest circumstance of life, most insignificant gift out of oneself, or what one has, the smallest action, assumes a Divine significance, and it becomes an acceptable offering to the God-head, who makes it a means for His possession of the soul and life of the God-lover. The distinctions made by desire and ego then disappear. As there is no straining after the good result of one's action, no shunning of unhappy results, but all actions and results are given up to the Supreme, to whom all work and fruit in the world belong for ever, there is no further bondage. For by an absolute self-giving, all egoistic desires disappear from the heart. All will, all action, all result become that of the God head, work Divinely through the purified and illumined nature, and no longer belong to the limited personal ego The finite nature thus surrendered becomes a free channel of the Infinite" (Essays on Gita). "It is thus that life can be changed into worship, by putting behind it the spirit of a transcendent and universal love, the seeking of oneness, by making each act an expression of Godward emotion, or a relation with the Divine, by turning all we do into an act of worship, an act of the soul's communion, the mind's understanding, the life's obedience, the heart's surrender". (Synthesis of Yoga, Page 185). Surrender of the pettiest details of life has given rise to the practice of some of the devotees to get the name of their beloved Divine, repeated before eating or even before drinking water.

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥ २६ ॥

IX-26 The Lord says :—He who offers to Me with devotion even a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, that

offering of love from the striving soul is acceptable to Me.

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥ २७ ॥

IX-27. O Kaunteya, whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice, whatever you give or donate, whatever personal efforts you make for self purification, do all these acts as an offering to Me.

शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्ष्यसे कर्मबन्धनैः ।
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥ २८ ॥

IX-28. *You shall thus be liberated from good or evil results of Karmas, which constitute the bondages of action.* With your soul in union with the Divine through self-abnigation, you shall be liberated and attain to Me.

C (4)—SURRENDER IS THE SUREST WAY OF DIVINE ATTAINMENT FOR ALL (IX-29 to 33)

There are diverse paths of God realisation, but some of them involve arduous ascetic *disciplines, not suitable or* practicable for an ordinary *man to practise. The method of surrender can be practised without any strain by an average* man even while performing daily avocations of life. Smallest beginning has a great significance, once one takes it up with full faith. The practice of verbally surrendering all activities of daily life to the Divine, such as eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, and other initiations of actions, is pychological remembrance of God. A man of even most degraded nature can follow it with advantage to start with. This will work as a curb on his *degraded nature, since he* will naturally hesitate to *dedicate an evil action to God by* uttering His name. *Smallest offering like leaf, flower or*

ego, mind, sense and body Even the pettiest details of life are to be considered as offerings to the Divine To begin with one can learn to offer whatever little he can, with sincere love and devotion, without any idea of a suitible return in bargain. Shri Aurovindo says, "the least, the sligthest circumstance of life, most insignificant gift out of oneself, or what one has, the smallest action, assumes a Divine significance, and it becomes an acceptable offering to the God-head, who makes it a means for His possession of the soul and life of the God-lover The distinctions made by desire and ego then disappear As there is no straining after the good result of one's action, no shunning of unhappy results, but all actions and results are given up to the Supreme, to whom all work and fruit in the world belong for ever, there is no further bondage For by an absolute self-giving, all egoistic desires disappear from the heart All will, all action, all result become that of the God head, work Divinely through the purified and illumined nature, and no longer belong to the limited personal ego The finite nature thus surrendered becomes a free channel of the Infinite" (Essays on Gita) "It is thus that life can be changed into worship, by putting behind it the spirit of a transcendent and universal love, the seeking of oneness, by making each act an expression of Godward emotion, or a relation with the Divine, by turning all we do into an act of worship, an act of the soul's communion, the mind's understanding, the life's obedience, the heart's surrender" (Synthesis of Yoga, Page 185) Surrender of the pettiest details of life has given rise to the practice of some of the devotees to get the name of their beloved Divine, repeated before eating or even before drinking water.

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥ २६ ॥

IX-26 The Lord says —He who offers to Me with devotion even a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, that

water to Him with full faith and devotion is enough to turn the corner. Once on the Path, there is no retrogression, and such small beginnings develop into constant remembrance and surrender even while one is busy in the routine of his daily life. God makes no distinction between high or low. virtuous or vicious. His Grace is not reserved only for advanced persons. It flows like the Ganges, in which even the worst sinner is free to take a dip, whether he may be a Vaishya, Shudra, a fallen woman, or a great sinner.

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः ।
ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ।। २९ ।।

IX-29. The Lord thus says :- I pervade all created beings with an equal vision. None is hateful or dear to Me. Those who adore Me with love get established in Me and I in them

अपि चेत्सुदुराचार भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यगव्यवसितो हि सः ।। ३० ।।

IX-30. Even if the greatest evil-doer adores Me with unswerving mind, he must be deemed to be a saint because of his firm resolve.

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्ति निगच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रति जानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ।। ३१ ।।

IX-31. Swiftly he develops into a righteous man, and attains Eternal Peace. O Kaunteya, know it for certain that My devotee is never out of my sight and thus never falls.

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युःपापयोनयः ।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परांगतिम् ।। ३२ ।।

IX-32. Because those who surrender themselves to Me, whether they be progenies of sinful parents, or women,

or unscrupulous businessmen, or shudras, attain the Supreme goal.

किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।
अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥ ३३ ॥

IX-33. Then why should not holy Brahmans and devoted king-sages attain the Supreme goal? Having taken birth in this transient and unhappy world, you should devote yourself to Me with love.

C (5) – ESSENTIALS OF SURRENDER (IX–34)

A will of self-giving and surrender opens all the gates of the Spirit, and brings in response an entire descent of the God to the human being, that reshapes and assimilates every thing in him to the Divine Law by a rapid transformation of Lower Nature into the Spiritual Nature. The veil between God and man is automatically cut asunder. This is not so easy with those who rely on their personal efforts of arduous severe penances of mental and sense atrophy, for lack of reliance on any external aid like the Divine Grace of a *Bhakta*

An integral surrender to the Divine should consist of the following essential elements fused together in the conduct of daily life of a devotee.

(i) Surrender of mind (Manmana) :

To become truly God-minded, one has to learn to live and act both in the mundane and Spiritual consciousness. It is essential for a true Bhakta or devotee to preserve the normal mundane consciousness of action. A little absent mindedness in normal actions of life, makes a muddle of his acts, and he may even be discarded by the world as a mentally deranged person. For a Divine worker, conscious concentration in his routine work is indispensable. It may be argued that combination of any other consciousness,

water to Him with full faith and devotion is enough to turn the corner. Once on the Path, there is no retrogression, and such small beginnings develop into constant remembrance and surrender even while one is busy in the routine of his daily life. God makes no distinction between high or low, virtuous or vicious. His Grace is not reserved only for advanced persons. It flows like the Ganges, in which even the worst sinner is free to take a dip, whether he may be a Vaishya, Shudra, a fallen woman, or a great sinner.

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or a thought of even God during work may disturb his mental balance, and that he may not be considered fit to be trusted with any responsible work, being looked upon as a maniac. Thus to become simultaneously God-minded and world-minded may be considered incompatible. Therefore, it may be considered advisable for one who chooses to become God-minded, to give up all works, and to retire from the world The trend, of the integral Yoga of Geeta has always been towards the triune combination of Karma, Gyan and Bhakti in order to transform a devotee into a true Divine worker and a God-lover. A realised person is, therefore, advised to conduct his life in the world like all others, but with a Spiritual backing, like Janak and others, with the sole object of transforming ignorant persons into Spiritual consciousness by his example, and thus to lead them on the Divine Path.

(ii Surrender of Heart (Mada-Bhakta) :

Normally a man remains confined to the lower emotions of earthly love and desires of lower nature. He cannot thus develop a true emotion of his heart's love for the Divine. In order to become a true God-lover, he must transfer his wordly love and emotions to the Spiritual emotion and love for the Divine.

(iii) Surrender of action (Madyaji) :

It is necessary to become a Divine worker in all actions of daily life (Brahma Karma Samadhina), in order to transform Lower Nature of ego, sense and mind into Spiritual Nature. He thus begins to co-operate with the Cosmic Divine action (Yagna). All actons of such a devotee thus become a dedication to the Divine.

(iv) Surrender of physical body (Mam 'Namaskuru) :

It is not enough merely to ormally prostrate or bow down as an ostentatious submission to the Divine. We have to transform the old habit of bowing down to our egoistic

will, into the true submission to the Divine Will, in order to become a true Bhakta This is the inner sense of the word "Namaskuru" or prostration before the Divine.

(v) Surrender of self to the Divine (Atmanam Mata Parayanah).

A true devotee realises his individual self, and begins to experience his self as the selves of all, and then further realises all selves as the one Cosmic Self He thus subordinates and surrenders his sense of individuality into the Cosmic self, and thereby attains Union with the Divine There is thus a total dedication of ego, mind, senses and body to the Divine The devotee thereby becomes a free mechanical channel of Divine Will and Divine Action By gradual development of these qualities, his lower nature is transformed into Spiritual Nature, and he becomes eligible to enter the Divine embrace

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥ ३४ ॥

IX 34 The Lord thus says :—Becoming My-minded (i), and My devotee (ii), sacrificing everything to Me (iii), ever bowing down to My Will (iv), and surrendering your Atma or self to Me (v), you shall attain Me

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Thus comes to an end Chapter IX, entitled "Supreme mystery of Master-Wisdom"

CHAPTER X

A (1)—GOD IN EVOLUTIONARY POWER OF BECOMING (VIBHUTI) (X—1, 2, 3)

The Lord advised Arjun to surrender himself to Him for Supreme attainment But who is it, that claims such allegiance ? It is not possible for an ordinary human mind to have any conception of the Abstract All pervading Divine for such devotion and surrender It needs something concrete to catch hold of for meditation and adoration The Lord in order to solve this difficulty, discloses the secret of His immanence in the created existence, through special creations (Vibhutis)

According to Shri Aurovindo, "the Divine is the unborn Eternal, Transcendent Being, who has no origin But at the same time the Divine Transcendence is not a negation, nor is it an Absolute empty of all relations to the Universe All Cosmic relations derive from the Supreme, all Cosmic existence return to it, and find in it alone their true and immeasurable existence The Supreme who becomes all creations, yet infinitely transcends it, is not a Will less cause aloof from His creation He is the mighty Lord of the worlds and peoples, and governs all not only from within but from above, from his Supreme Transcendence

For furtherence of creation, the Divine as Brahman brought into existence seven Spiritual Energies known as Maharshis and their subordinate agencies known as Devas These Maharshis and Devas being His creations are unaware of this Over-Lord aspect working in the Universe through them The Devas are the great undying Powers and Immortal Personalities who consciously in form, constitute, preside over the subjective and objective forces of the Cosmos. The Gods a e spiritual forms of the eternal and original deity, who descend from Him into the Many processes of the world All their own existence, nature, power,

process proceeds in every way, in every principle,, in its every strand, from the Truth of the Transcendent Ineffable". (Shri Aurovindo)

भूय एव महाबाहो श्रृणु मे परमं वचः ।
यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥ १ ॥

X-1 The Lord says : O Mighty-armed, listen again to My Supreme word I will disclose it to you, as I am desirous of your well-being since you are My intense lover.

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः ।
अहमादिर्हि देवानां महर्षीणां च सर्वशः ॥ २ ॥

X-2. Neither the Devas nor the Maharshis are aware of My creative aspect, because I am in every origin of those rishis and devas.

यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम् ।
असंमूढः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

X-3. Whosoever realises Me as the Unborn without origin, and as the Mighty Over-Lord of the worlds and peoples, he among the mortals crosses beyond the delusions of Ignorance, and is liberated from all sins.

A (2)—RISHIS, DEVAS AND MANUS RADIATE SATVIC QUALITIES IN CREATED BEINGS

(X—4 to 7)

Mythological version of creation is that Brahma created four Kumaras (Chatvaro), seven rishis and fourteen Manus to carry on the Cosmic administration, by infusing Spiritual and Satvic qualities in human nature, as Prajapatis. These Satvic qualities of higher Mental and higher Astral planes are described in verses 4 and 5, as intellect wisdom, non-

illusion, forgiveness, truth, sense control, mind control, discriminating faculty to judge between true pleasure and pain, birth or death, fear or fearlessness, non-injury, equanimity, contentment, donations (Dan), and glory.

It may be interesting to know the puranic description of the creation of these Spiritual Beings or Rishis, Devas and Manus, and their functions of radiating higher mental and higher astral qualities in human nature for evolution. Brahma is said to have created ten Rishis from his body to act as official Deva hierarchy, in order to infuse Satvic principles in humanity to aid its evolution These Rishis are the Cosmic Intelligences working as Prajapatis, each radiating his particular evolutionary ray in the creation. They are the heads of their respective Nature-gods, who help them in their evolutionary activity under their guidance These nature gods are named in the puranas as Adityas, Vasus, Indra, Varun, Ashwani Kumar, Vayu, Dik, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Charan, Vidyadhar etc working variously in higher mental and higher astral planes. They influence evolutionary urge in the mental, desire, and physical bodies of human beings

Description of the evolutionary Satvic principles radiated by these Rishis or Prajapatis as described in the Bhagwat Puran is briefly as follows :

I Rishis, the radiators of Satvic Energies

Brahma produced ten following Rishis .

(i) Marichi (Ray of Light) married Kala (Art), and developed Divine Ray of Jiva and Ideative Archetypal forms of creation in Mahar Loka, and produced Kashyapa, to materialise them

(ii) Vashista married Arundhati (Urja) or evolutionary urge and gave birth to Mitra (friendly tie).

(iii) Bhragu married Khyati (Fame), and gave birth to Shri (opulence) and Kavi (inspired mind)

(iv) Kratu (Activity) married Kriya (Action) and gave birth to pigmy Balkhilya Rishis who run faster and ahead of the Sun's chariot, indicating the intensity of action.

(v) Pulaha married Gati (Motion) and gave birth to Karma-Srestha (Skilled worker).

(vi) Pulasta married Havirbhu (Glutton) and gave birth to Agastya (Devourer of oceans), and grand sons Kuber (Material opulence), Ravan and Kumbha Karan (prosperous materialists).

(vii) Angiras (Formative energy) married Shraddha (Faith) and gave birth to Brahaspati (creative intelligence) to guide the devas in the art of form creation.

(viii) Atri (one and not three) married Anusuiya, and gave birth to Dattatraya (the triple God head) for creation, preservation and dissolution of existence.

(ix) Narada (The Divine Wisdom) unites Jiva with the Divine.

(x) Daksha (the proficient) married Prasuti, the procreative energy, and gave birth to sixteen daughters, who infused Satvic qualities in human nature. These daughters represent the sixteen primal energies, out of which the following thirteen were allied to or married to Dharma, the Divine Law of action :

(1) Shraddha or Divine faith gave birth to Satya (Truth).

(2) Maitri (Friendly affinity) gave birth to Prasad (bliss)

(3) Daya (Kindness) gave birth to Abhaya (Fearlessness).

(4) Shanti (Peace) gave birth to Sham (Mental calm).

(5) Tushti (Contentment) gave birth to Harsha (Joy).

(6) Pushti (Abundance) gave birth to Garva (Pride).

(7) Kriya (Activity) gave birth to Yoga (Divine Union).

(8) Unnati (Prosperity) gave birth to Darpa (Vanity).

(9) Buddhi (Intelligence) gave birth to Artha (Desire).

(10) Medha (Intellect) gave birth to Smriti (Memory).

(11) Titiksha (Forbearance) gave birth to Kshema (Well-being)

(12) Lajja (Modesty) gave birth to Vinaya (Humbleness).

(13) Murti (Form) gave birth to Nar (Human form) and Narayan, the Divine Purush.

The remaining three daughters of Daksha married three separate Cosmic energies as follows : —

(14 Swaha (Offering) married Agni (Divine fire) and gave birth to fire energies of Pawaka, Pawamana (material fires) and Suchi (purifying energy). They in turn produced fortyfive fire energies like digestive fire and others

(15) Swadha married Pitris (ancestors), and supplied food of liberating thoughts.

(16) Sati (Truth) married Sheo (Bliss) and gave birth to Spiritual Wisdom (Ganesh),

II Manus, the radiators of mental energies.

Rishis are the inhabitants of Mahar Loka and radiate their energies in the Triloki from that plane. Manus are inhabitants of higher mental plane and radiate mental energies from there. The work of the rishis or Prajapatis could be carried on only if there were creatures capable of absorbing the subtle influence of higher Satvic Intelligences. There was thus descent of Cosmic mind on the earth plane,

which gave birth to mental beings. Brahma is said to have produced Manu and Satrupa from his body. By their union were born Priya-vrat, Uttanpad and three daughters Akuti, Deva-huti and Prasuti. The present humanity is the progeny of these two sons and three daughters of Manu. Manu is the Cosmic Mental being, who presides over the seven sub-planes of the mental world, and radiates rays of all these sub-planes in the humanity.

In one Kalpa there are fourteen Manvantars and each Manvantar has a separate Manu, to evolve mental powers in men gradually from the lowest mental level to higher and higher mental levels. We are running in the seventh Manvantar of Varah Kalpa, and Vaivyasvata is the present Manu. Man has become sufficiently evolved mentally, and is fast developing scientific and other intellectual mental levels at present. Egoistic mind seems to be gradullay receding at a low ebb. A nation which only a few years back gloated over with pride on the extent of its colonial empire, now feels hesitant to be classed as a colonial imperialist. Freedom, equality, demand for cessation of wars and introduction of several types of socialism are becoming watch-words of the day. But the forcible separation of national Ego bursts out inspite of one's self, resulting in tense atmosphere of Cold War, which in the past could have certainly exploded into a hot war. This latter possibility has become remote and may become extinct in course of time. Such a change in national ego may be attributed to the emergence of some occult mental energies of the present Manu.

Shri Aurovindo has definitely experienced the descent of Super-mind on the earth level. We have already begun to notice the fast unexpected change in human mentality, to restore freedom to long en-slaved nations, to abolish colonialism, exploitation, inequality and warmongering. All nations including the old imperialists, proclaim high sounding principles of World Peace, abolition of wars, world parliament, disarmament, co-existence, non-interference in

other nations' domestic affairs, respect for each other's sovereignty, and removal of poverty and exploitation of the working class. This mental higher outlook once started is bound to take root in course of time. Inspite of temporary dead-locks, as it is only a progressive step in the Divine plan of evolution, the old concept of a dreamt of millennium, and descent of the Kingdom of God on earth, may no longer remain an Utopian dream in the ages to come In the occult sense this wonderful transformation will be the result of the evolving Spiritual Energies released by the Rishis, Devas and Manus.

The secret working of the evolutionary principles allegorically described in the Puranas is disclosed by the Lord in a nut shell in the following verses :—

बुद्धिर्ज्ञानमसंमोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः ।
सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयमेव च ॥ ४ ॥

X-4 The Lord says :—Intelligence, wisdom, non-illusions, forgiveness, truth, sense-control, mind-control, pleasure, pain, becoming (Birth), non-becoming (Death),

अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दानं यशोऽयशः ।
भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विधाः ॥ ५ ॥

X-5 fear, fearlessness, non-injury, equanimity, contentment, austerity, self-giving, glory, notoriety, all these subtle subjective principles diversely effecting the created beings emanate from Me.

महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा ।
मद्भावा मानसा जातायेषां लोक इमाःप्रजाः ॥ ६ ॥

X-6 Seven Maharshis, the ancient four (Kumaras) and fourteen Manus are creations of My Mental Being. Multiple variety of living creatures owe their descent in existence to them.

एतां विभूतिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥ ७ ॥

X-7 He who knows in essence this Union of mine with the existence through these Vibhutis (Vibhutim Yogam), undoubtedly unites himself to Me by an unfaltering practice of Yoga

A(3)—SUPRA-MENTAL EVOLUTION OF BUDDHI YOGA THROUGH DIVINE GRACE (X—8-11)

Evolution is the Nature's Spiritual process, with which a man being endowed with mind and intellect must co-operate and participate to hasten that process, which the animal or plant was unable to do *If there is an effort from below,* there descends Divine Grace from above to effectuate evolution to the next Supra-mental stage Life and mind have so far descended down on earth and are made available to man *for further evolution. The next graded ascent is that* of the openings of higher mental levels and of Supra-mental level of Buddhic plane. But a man has to prepare a proper field for their descent. This *can be done by purification of* Lower Nature *aided by intense aspiration,* surrender and devotion to the Divine

Ascent of man to *Supra-mental level opens for him vast* vistas of Divine Omnipresence, Omniscience and Omnipotence pervading the entire existence. Such ascent is possible if one makes the *Divine the Sole object of concentration in his mind, life, speech and* action. By evolution of Buddhic consciousness, entire vision of existence is completely changed Vision of diversity *is replaced by one of* universality, *and one begins to* concretely visualise the One Divine uniformly pervading and displaying Himself in various ways in this multiple *creation. Such a vision is* said *to be the opening of the third eye of* Supra-mental sight

to enable a man to concretely enjoy and partake in the mysterious blissful dance of the Lord

By the awakening of Vigyanmaya Kosha in this manner one finds himself attracted towards higher Spiritual attainments. He diverts all activities of his life, mind, intellect, speech and heart towards the Divine, who in response transforms his Lower Nature into Spiritual Nature and firmly establishes him in Supra mental consciousness (Pragya-Prathisthit). Personal effort for this uplift may not prove of much avail unless it is accompanied by intense devotion and surrender to the Divine to invite His Grace

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।
इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः ॥ ८ ॥

X-8. The Lord thus says :—I am the source of the entire creation, and it is I who energise it in action. The wise having realised this Truth, adore Me with rapt emotion.

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥ ९ ॥

X-9 With their consciousness engrossed in Me, their life wholly *dedicated to Me, their intellect solely engaged* in My thought by mutually conversing only about Me, and their hearts finding satisfaction by constantly remaining immersed in Me.

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥ १० ॥

X-10 To such devotees who adore Me with love and who remain in constant union with Me, I bestow Buddhi Yoga, through which they finally attain Me.

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥ ११ ॥

X-11. Out of compassion, I destroy the darkness born of Ignorance rooted in their lower self, by the blazing light of Wisdom.

B (1)—ARJUN'S REQUEST FOR GOD-VISION IN CREATED EXISTENCE (X—12 to 18)

Arjun had heard enough of the Cosmic Divine existence, and believes that as perfectly true. But this Abstract conception does not appeal to him, being beyond his concrete experience. He is anxious to know how and in what forms he can concretely realise Divine presence in this multifold existence. The Divine *pervades the material existence, and* has an intimate relation with all that *exists, but still remains* beyond human perception. It is by developing the third eye of Universal vision by attainment of Buddhi Yoga, that concrete expression of the Divine presence in the multiple existence becomes a possibility. Attainment of Buddhi Yoga opens the eye of wisdom for visualising the occult Divine energy, constantly working and evolving out forms after forms in this multifold creation. The Divine plays a game of hide and seek, and though present everywhere keeps Himself concealed behind the forms. Shri Aurovindo says"For ordinary human intellect the idea of the Divine is like a speculative idea, not as a realised truth, nor as *direct sight* or dynamic vision coupled with a concrete *undeniable experience. Arjun, therefore, implores Lord · Krishna to disclose to him* how the *Divine is pervading the existence* and through what special creations is it possible for him to have a dynamic Divine vision, coupled with concrete undeniable experience".

परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान् ।
पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदेवमजं विभुम् ॥ १२ ॥

X-12. Arjun says : O Lord, You are the Supreme Brahman, Supreme Abode, Supreme *Purity. the Eternal Divine Purush, the Primal God-Head,* the Unborn and the all *pervading* Lord.

आहुस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिर्नारदस्तथा ।
असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे ॥ १३ ॥

X-13. All the Rishis, Devarshi Narad, Asita, Devala Rishi, and Vyas declare the same thing about You, and You too affirm the same to Me.

सर्वमेतदृतं मन्ये यन्मां वदसि केशव ।
न हि ते भगवन्व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः ॥ १४ ॥

X-14. I hold as perfectly true all what You have said to me. Neither the gods nor the Danavas know Your manifested form.

स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ।
भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥ १५ ॥

X-15. O Purushottam, You alone know Yourself. You are the source of created beings, Lord of multiple existence, God of gods and Lord of the world.

वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि ॥ १६ ॥

X-16. You alone are capable of describing in whole your magnificient self-manifestation through special becomings *(Vibhutis), by which You stand pervading in all these* Cosmic Planes.

कथं विद्यामहं योगिंस्त्वां सदा परिचिन्तयन् ।
केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया ॥ १७ ॥

X-17. O Yogin, how am I to constantly remember You? In what forms should You be contemplated upon by me.

विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दन ।
भूयः कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम् ॥ १८ ॥

X-18. O Janardan, again disclose to me in details the Union of Your Self with the existence and about your special manifestations as Vibhutis. I never feel satisfied however much I may hear Your sweet words like nectar.

B (2)—DIVINE REVEALATION THROUGH SPECIAL CREATIONS OR VIBHUTIS (X—19 to 39)

The Lord grants Arjun's request, and agrees to disclose to him some of the magnificient Self-Creations, on which he may meditate as concrete Divine expression in this existence. Universal Vision of the Divine in created existence transports a man into the bliss of Shri Krishna's Lila (Play) in this existence Shri Aurovindo says that "Throughout the rest of the Chapter we get a summary description of these principal indications these pre eminent signs of the Divine force present in the things and persons of the universe It seems at first as if they were given pell-mell without any order, but still we can disengage a certain principle in the enumeration, for while we must identify ourselves impartially with the universal Divine becoming in all its extension, we must at the same time realise that there is an ascending evolutionary power in it, and increasing intensity of its revealation in things, a hierarchic secret, something that carries us upwards from the first concealed appearances through higher and higher forms, towards the large ideal Nature of the Universal God-head '

Special Divine manifestations in Vibhutis relate not only to the physical creations of this world, but also to the special creations in the ascending six Higher planes Out of the special Divine manifestation described in this Chapter, I may roughly sort out those that relate to the created becomings of different Cosmic planes, as follows :—

Vibhutis in physical plane—Mountains, oceans, trees, elephants, horses, cows, serpents, acquatic and other animals, birds, fishes, rivers, warriors, war weapons, dynasties of Pandavas and Vrishnis, heroes, speculators, months, seasons etc.

Vibhutis in astral plane—Senses, Pitras, Daityas, Kirti, Fame, Shri, Speech, Yaksha, Rakshasa, etc

Vibhutis in mental plane—Devas, Vasus, Gandharvas, Yama, Smriti (memory), Medha (Intellect), Munis, Intellectual reasoning etc.

Vibhutis in Mahar Loka—Divine light (Jyoti), Vedas, Rudra, Maharshis, Devarshis, Siddhas, Kavi (seers), Gayatri, Yagna, *Spiritual knowledge etc.*

Vibhutis in higher three Spiritual planes—Individual selves (jiva), Aditya (the first born), Divine light, Energies of preservation (Dhata) and destruction etc.

The Lord now proceeds to describe some of His special manifestations (Vibhutis) in the created beings of different planes.

हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥ १९ ॥

X-19. The Lord says :—I will disclose to you some of My magnificient Self-creations *pre-eminently*. O Arjun, there is no end of My Self-extension in the Universe.

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।
अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥ २० ॥

X-20. O Gudakesh, I am seated in the hearts of all creatures as Atma (Self), I am the creator, preserver and dissolver of the created beings.

आदित्यानामहं विष्णुर्ज्योतिषां रविरंशुमान् ।
मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी ॥ २१ ॥

X-21. Among the Adityas (Primal creations) I exhibit Myself as Vishnu, among the resplendents as the radiant Sun, among the Marichis as Maru, and among the planets as the Moon.

वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः ।
इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना ॥ २२ ॥

X-22. My Self-expression among the Vedas is as Sam Veda among Devas as Indra, among the senses as mind, and among the living creatures as their life consciousness.

रुद्राणां शंकरश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम् ।
वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम् ॥ २३ ॥

X-23. I exhibit Myself as Shankar among the Rudras, as Kuber among Yakshas and Rakshasas, as fire among Basus, as Meru among the highest peaks.

पुरोधसां च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम् ।
सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरसामस्मि सागरः ॥ २४ ॥

X-24. *Know Me as Brahaspati among the Spiritual preceptors,* as Skandha among the warriors, and as ocean among the lakes.

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम् ।
यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः ॥ २५ ॥

X-25. My special expression among the Maharshis is in Bhragu, among the spoken words as in "Aum", among the sacrifices in Japa Yagna, and among the immovables in Himalayas.

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणां च नारदः
गन्धर्वाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः ॥ २६ ॥

X-26. Among the trees I exhibit Myself as Ashwath, among the sages (Devarshis) as Naradi, among the gandharvas Chitra-Rath, and among the realised Munis as Kapil.

उच्चैःश्रवसमश्वानां विद्धि माममृतोद्भवम् ।
ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणां च नराधिपम् ॥ २७ ॥

X-27 Among the horses, know My special-expression in the nector-born Uchaishrava, among the elephants in Airavata (of Indra), among human beings as their kings.

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धेनूनामस्मि कामधुक् ।
प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः ॥ २८ ॥

X-28 Among the war weapons I express Myself as the Divine thunder-bolt, among the cows as Kamdhenu, among the procreative principles as Kandarp, the Love god, and among the snakes as Vasuki.

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम् ।
पितॄणामर्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम् ॥ २९ ॥

X 29. Among the Nagas I exhibit Myself as Anant, among the acquatic creatures as Varuna, among the Pitris as Aryaman, and among the ordainers as god Yama

प्रह्लादश्चास्मि दैत्याना कालः कलयतामहम् ।
मृगाणा च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम् ॥ ३० ॥

X-30 Among the Daityas I exhibit Myself as Prahlada, among the reckoners as Time (Kal), among the animals as Lion, and among the birds as Garuda.

पवनः पवतामस्मि रामः शस्त्रभृतामहम् ।
झषाणा मकरश्चास्मि स्त्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी ॥ ३१ ॥

X-31 Among the purifiers I express Myself as winds among the warriors as Ram, among the water animals as crocodile, and among the water streams as the Ganges

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन ।
अध्यात्मविद्या विद्याना वादः प्रवदतामहम् ॥ ३२ ॥

X-32 I am the beginning, the end, and also the middle of all the planes of existence, O Arjun, I am Spiritual

Knowledge among the many philosphies and sciences. I am the logic of the dialecticians.

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च ।
अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताहं विश्वतोमुखः ॥ ३३ ॥

X-33 I am the letter A among letters, among the compounds I am the dual compound (of Spirit and matter), in the time-existence I am eternity. As the preserver of existences, I am the Cosmic facet Virat Purush.

मृत्युः सर्वहरश्चाहमुद्भवश्च भविष्यताम् ।
कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा ॥ ३४ ॥

X-34 Among the consuming energies I am the Death, and I am also the birth of all that shall come into being. Among the subtle delicate qualities, I am glory, beauty, speech, memory, intelligence, steadfastness and forgiveness.

बृहत्साम तथा साम्नां गायत्री छन्दसामहम् ।
मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृतूनां कुसुमाकरः ॥ ३५ ॥

X-35 Among the lyrical compositions I am the great Sam-Veda, among the sacred verses I am Gayatri, among the months I am Margshir, and among seasons I am spring.

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।
जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम् ॥ ३६ ॥

X-36 I am gambling of the cheats, might and splendour of the mighty and splendorous, victory of the victors, and firm resolution of the determined. I am Satvic qualities of the righteous.

वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनंजयः ।
मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः ॥ ३७ ॥

X-37 I am Vasudeva among Vrishnis, Arjun among the Pandavas, Vyas among the Munis, and Ushna Kavi among the seers.

दण्डो दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम् ।
मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ॥ ३८ ॥

X-38 Among the penalisers I am the King's sceptre and rod, among the victory-seekers I am their statesmanship, among the secrets I am silence, and among the wise I am their knowledge.

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन ।
न तदस्ति विना यत्स्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम् ॥ ३९ ॥

X-39 O Arjun, I am the seed of all created beings. Nothing moving or unmoving, animate or inanimate in the world than can exist bereft of Me.

B (3)—VIBHUTIS ARE FRAGMENTARY DIVINE REVELATION. (X—40 to 42)

These specially evolved creations no doubt give us a glimpse of the Divine presence in the multifold created beings, and to some extent satisfy our mental and emotional urge. Yet this an infinitesimal revelation of the Divine pervasion. Glimpse of the Divine in manifested existence is only a preparatory stage for complete revelation, which becomes possible, on complete conversion of consciousness into His consciousness, by total surrender.

To quote Shri Aurovindo, "all classes, genera, species and individuals are Vibhutis of the One. But He is specially apparent in whatever is of a pre-eminent value, or seems to act with a powerful pre-eminent force. And therefore in each kind of being we can see Him, most in those in whom the power of nature of that kind reaches its highest, its

leading, its most *effectively self-revealing* manifestation. These are in a special sense Vibhutis. Yet the highest power and manifestation is only a very partial revelation of the Infinite. Even the whole Universe is in-formed by only one degree of His greatness, illumined by one ray of His splendour, glorious with a faint hint of His delight and beauty".

It is for this reason that Lord Krishna says that it would not be of much avail to know more of His special revelations in this existence, since they give only a partial glimpse of Divine Pervasion. Arjun, therefore, naturally feels inclined to implore Lord Krishna to reveal to him a total vision of His manifestation in the Cosmos, in the next Chapter.

नान्तोऽस्मि मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परंतप ।
एष तूद्देशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरो मया ॥ ४० ॥

X-40. The Lord says :—O Parantap, there is no end of My Divine expressions in special created becomings. It is only for your sake, that I have disclosed some details of My pervasion in special creations (Vibhutis), by way of illustration.

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोंऽशसंभवम् ॥ ४१ ॥

X-41. Whatever exists here as glorious, beautiful and mighty, know all that as derived from a fragment of My splendour.

अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन ।
विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥ ४२ ॥

X-42. O Arjun, what purpose would it serve you to know more of My Vibhutis ? I exist pervading and sustaining this entire existence by a fragment of Myself

[Thus ends Chapter X named "Vibhuti Yoga"]

CHAPTER XI

A(1)—ARJUN'S REQUEST TO THE LORD TO REVEAL HIS COSMIC FORM. (XI—1 to 4)

It has been brought home to Arjun, that the individual multiple creation does not exist, flourish or terminate independently by its own inherent power, but that even the most insignificant created being has its direct link with the Cosmic Spirit involved within, and that its evolution is only a gradually developing urge of that Spirit. But this Divine expression through Vibhutis is only a fragmentary ray of the Divine Splendour, Glory, Delight, and Beauty. Arjun therefore declares that his doubt about the possibility of intimate direct relation of existence with the Divine has disappeared, but that his curiosity is further excited to visualise the Cosmic Divine Splendour and the secret Cosmic process working behind the manifested existence

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।
यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम ॥ १ ॥

Arjun thus requests the Lord as follows —

XI-1 Arjun says —These words of the highest Spiritual secret of existence that You have spoken out of compassion for me, have dispelled the confusion of my mind

भवाप्ययौ हि भूताना श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया ।
त्वत्तःकमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥ २ ॥

XI-2 O Lotus eyed, the process of creation and dissolution of created beings has been heard by me in detail from You, together with Your imperishable magnificient Splendour

एवमेतद्यथात्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर ।
द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमैश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥ ३ ॥

XI-3 O Supreme Lord, all that is perfectly true as You have Yourself declared O Purushottam, I am now

desirous to visualise Your dynamic Cosmic Form (Roop-Maishvaram).

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।
योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम् ॥ ४ ॥

XI-4. O Master of Yoga, if You think that this form can possibly be seen by me, please exhibit that Form of Your imperishable Self before me.

A (2)—SPIRITUAL EYE ONLY CAN VISUALISE THE COSMIC DIVINE FORM (XI-5 to 8)

Capacity of human brain *is extremely limited to have* any conception of a Cosmic Form. Even when we mentally try to grasp the idea of the extent of Space in terms of Light years, our brain admits its incapacity to visualise it. Infinite Space including existences of innumerable Suns, planets, moons and stars is merely an outer crust of the Brahmanda (*Cosmos*). The *entire outer existence* is like a *finished product, serene, attractive, beautiful, and loving to* look at. *But its appearance in the stages of its manufacturing* and *processings in the occult Cosmic factories con*cealed behind our vision, is awe-inspiring, most unsightly, terrible and nerve breaking. It is this inner occult working of the Cosmos, that Arjun desires to see, but his human sight and brain has no capacity to visualise it. The Lord, therefore, bestows Spiritual Vision to him to enable him to satisfy his curiosity.

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।
नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च ॥ ५ ॥

XI-5. The Lord says :—O Parth, behold *My hundred-fold and thousand-fold Divine Forms various in kind, and* various in shapes and sizes.

पश्यादित्यान्वसून्रुद्रानश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा ।
बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याश्चर्याणि भारत ॥ ६ ॥

XI-6. Behold the 12 Adityas, eight Vasus, the 11 Rudras, the 2 Ashwani Kumars, and the 49 Maruts. Behold many marvels that none his behold before, O Bharat.

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।
मम देहे गुडाकेश*यच्चान्यद्द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥ ७ ॥

XI-7. O Gudakesh, behold here the whole world with all that is moving and unmoving, collectively resting unified in My Body. Also behold all that you would have otherwise desired to visualise.

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।
दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥ ८ ॥

XI-8. But verily, you are not able to behold My Form with these eyes of yours. I will bestow upon you the Spiritual Vision to enable you to behold and realise the Union of existence with Me, as its dynamic Lord (Yoga-Maishvaram).

B (1)—VISION OF THE DYNAMIC DIVINE FORM (XI-9 to 14)

Arjun having been graced with Cosmic Vision was astonished and terrified at the sight of the Cosmic Divine; exhibiting multiple forms with numerous faces and eyes, adorned with spiritual ornaments, and armed with terrific weapons. He saw all heads of Daivic and Asuric forces, and all created beings lodged collectively in the body of that Cosmic Virat Purush. Sanjaya disclosed to Dhritrashtra the mental fright of Arjun at such a marvellous sight.

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन्महायोगेश्वरो हरिः ।
दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम् ॥ ९ ॥

XI-9. Sanjaya says :—O King, Hari, the great Lord of Yoga then displayed to Parth His Supreme dynamic Form.

अनेकवक्त्रनयनमनेकाद्भुतदर्शनम् ।
अनेकदिव्याभरणं दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् ॥ १० ॥

XI-10. Arjun saw the infinite God-Head having numerous mouths and numerous eyes all over, having many marvellous spectacular appearances adorned with various Divine ornaments and armed with numerous uplifted Divine weapons.

दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरं दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम् ।
सर्वाश्चर्यमयं देवमनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ ११ ॥

XI-11. Wearing Divine garlands and vestures fragrant with Divine perfumes, the God was all marvellous, boundless Cosmic faced.

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता ।
यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥ १२ ॥

XI-12. The Divine resplendence that Arjun saw could not be equalled by the collective splendour of thousand Suns blazing forth simultaneously.

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।
अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा ॥ १३ ॥

XI-13. There, Pandu's son Arjun behold the whole Universe multitudinously divided yet unitedly lodged in the body of the God of the gods

ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनंजयः ।
प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत ॥ १४ ॥

XI-14. Then Arjun overwhelmed with marvel, with hair standing erect with joy, bowed down his head to the Divine and prayed with folded hands.

B (2)—ARJUN'S ASTONISHMENT AT THE SIGHT OF THE COSMIC FORM AND HIS PRAYER TO HIM

(XI—15 to 22)

पश्यामि देवांस्तव देव देहे सर्वांस्तथा भूतविशेषसङ्घान् ।
ब्रह्माणमीशं कमलासनस्थमृषींश्च सर्वानुरगांश्च दिव्यान् ॥ १५ ॥

XI-15. Arjun says :—O Lord, I see all the gods lodged in your body besides special congregations of created beings. I see the Lord Brahma seated on the lotus, as well as all the rishis and Divine serpents.

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनन्तरूपम् ।
नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादिं पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप ॥ १६ ॥

XI-16 O Lord of the Universe, O Form Universal, I see Your numerous arms, bellies, eyes and faces. I see Your Infinite Form all around without and, middle or beginning.

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणं च तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम् ।
पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्ताद्दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम् ॥ १७ ॥

XI-17. I behold You crowned with mace and discus, resplendent all over with luminous mass of encompassing splendour, like the blazing Sun and incandescent fire, hard to bear its glaze

त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे ॥ १८ ॥

XI-18 You are the Supreme immutable Purushottam worthy of realisation. You are the Supreme resort of this Universe. You are imperishable secret source of the Eternal Cosmic Law, and I hold You as the eternal Purush.

अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्यमनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् ।
पश्यामि त्वा दीप्तहुताशवक्त्रं स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं तपन्तम् ॥ १९ ॥

XI-19 I see You bereft of any beginning, middle, or end, and endowed with infinite might, equipped with infinite arms, having sun and moon as eyes, and face like blazing fire I see You scorching the whole of the Universe with the blaze of Your dynamic Light

द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमन्तरं हि व्याप्तं त्वयैकेन दिशश्च सर्वा: ।
दृष्ट्वाद्भुतं रूपमुग्रं तवेदं लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं महात्मन् ॥ २० ॥

XI-20. O Mighty Spirit, the entire Space between the earth and heaven, and all directions are overwhelmingly pervaded by You. The three worlds are nervous and frightened at the sight of your terrible astounding Form

अमी हि त्वा सुरसङ्घा विशन्ति केचिद्भीता: प्राञ्जलयो गृणन्ति ।
स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसङ्घा: स्तुवन्ति त्वां स्तुतिभि: पुष्कलाभि: ॥ २१ ॥

XI-21. All these hordes of Devas are resting in Your body, and praying out of fear. Groups of Maharshis and Siddhas (the liberated) desirous of peace and weal recite numerous prayers in Your praise

रुद्रादित्या वसवो ये च साध्या विश्वेऽश्विनौ मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च ।
गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसङ्घा वीक्षन्ते त्वां विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे ॥ २२ ॥

XI-22. Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas, Cosmic gods, Ashwini Kumaras, Maruts, Pitras, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Rakshasas, and groups of Siddhas, all have their eyes fixed upon You with amazement

B (3)—VISION OF THE COSMIC TIME SPIRIT (KAL) AND ARJUN'S FRIGHT (XI—23 to 30)

Arjun's astonishment knew no bounds at the sight of the multifaced Cosmic Divine, attended all round by various Spiritual and Asuric beings, reverently offering prayers

to Him for appeasement, and groups of Titans fleeing out of fear in all directions. The Lord further displayed to him His terrific Cosmic dynamic Form, furiously active in the lower three planes, where All consuming Cosmic Energy of the terrible Time Spirit continuously work in full swing.

Creation, preservation and decay are the normal laws of the multiple existence, of which Time Spirit (Kal) is the principal operator. All this Cosmic processing continues incessantly behind the scene, of which human beings have no idea. We see only the finished product of various evolutionary grades, beautiful and exhilerating to look at. We feel charmed at the sight of natural scenes of mountains, rivers, plants, green verdures and landscapes, starry firmament, and all that is presented to our vision as ready-made creations. When the period of decay arrives all of them get destroyed by lapse of Time. Destruction is a process of renovation for better reconstruction. Behind our vision, there are terrific occult mechanical processing of the scrap left after earthly destruction, in the Cosmic furnace and rolling mills, wheeling round and round to remodel, erase, cleanse and to renovate that scrap into improved designs and models. "Old order changes yielding place to new", is the normal Cosmic Law of evolution. Human beings are subject to this processing of Nature according to the Karmic Law, in the astral and mental worlds.

Every death is a starting point of a rebirth, and every birth-day, on which we so much felicitate, is only a step forward towards death. Births and deaths constitute a continuity of Life's process, not by way of dissolution but solely by way of renovation. This race of the evolutionary principles of Nature must be prominently kept in view in the conduct of our lives on earth. We must co-operate with the laws of Nature, and not delay our progress by involving ourselves in egoistic desires, revenge, greed, attachments and pride. All these movements and activities

of Rudra are aimed at perfection by evolution. The debt of Rudra (ego) has to be paid to the renovating process of Time, before we can hope to attain the Bliss and Peace of Shankar (Sham or Peace and Kar or Bestower).

To quote Shri Aurovindo, "The Universal Being is also the Brahma who keeps the world always, in existence, for He is the guardian of the Eternal Laws but who is always too, destroying in order that he may new-create; who is Time, who is Death, who is Rudra, the dancer of the calm and awful Dance; who is Kali with Her garlands of skulls trampling naked in battle, and flecked with the blood of the slaughtered Titans; who is the cyclone, the fire, earth quake, pain, famines, revolution, ruin, and the swallowing ocean. It is an aspect from which the mind in men willingly turns away, and ostrich-like hides its head, so that per chance, not seeing, it may not be seen by the Terrible. The weakness of the human heart wants only fair and comforting Truths; it will not have the Truth in its entirety, because there is much that is not pleasant and comfortable, but hard to understand and harder to bear";

"To put away the responsibility for all that seems to us evil and terrible, on the shoulders of a semi-Omnipotent Devil, or to put it aside as part of nature, as if nature were independent of God, or to throw the responsibility on man and his sins, as if he had a preponderant voice in the making of this world, or could create anything against the Will of God, are clumsy comfortable devices in which the religious thought in India has never taken refuge. We have to live courageously in the face of the Reality, and see that it is God and none else who has made this world in His Being, and that so He has made it. The torment of the couch of pain and evil on which we are racked, is His touch as much as happiness, sweetness and pleasure. The discords of the worlds are God's discord, and it is only by accepting and proceeding through them, that we can arrive at the greater concords of His Supreme Harmony, the summits and

thrilled vastnesses of His transcendent and Cosmic Anand."

So long as a man remains obsessed by egoistic desires, he is helplessly subjected to the revolving wheel of Time Spirit. The Lord now displays to Arjun, His Form of the Time Spirit incessantly revolving the wheel of births and deaths, to evolve and renovate the created becomings of existence of the lower three worlds. Arjun feels terrified at this sight

रूपं महत्ते बहुवक्त्रनेत्रं महाबाहो बहुबाहूरुपादम् ।
बहूदरं बहुदंष्ट्राकरालं दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाहम् ॥ २३ ॥

XI-23 Arjun says.—O Mighty Armed, all the worlds including myself are getting un-nerved and terrified, at the sight of your lofty Form of numerous mouths, eyes, arms, thighs, feet and bellies, terrible looking with many teeth

नभःस्पृशं दीप्तमनेकवर्णं व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।
दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा धृतिं न विन्दामि शमं च विष्णो ॥ २४ ॥

XI-24 I see Your Form extending up to and touching the sky, blazing forth with many hues, with wide gaping mouths and vast shining eyes My soul within is filled with anguish at this sight of Yours. O Vishnu, my strength is withering, and I find no peace.

दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसन्निभानि ।
दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥ २५ ॥

XI-25 Seeing Your mouth with terrible expanding jaws like the flaming fire of Death, I have lost all sense of direction, and find no peace O God of the gods, the refuge of the world, be pleased to shower Your Grace on me.

अमी च त्वां धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्राः सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसङ्घैः ।
भीष्मो द्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथासौ सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः ॥ २६ ॥

XI-26 All the sons of Dhritarashtra along with multitudes *of all these kings of the* earth, Bhishma, Drona, Karna and also all the eminent warriors of our *side,*

वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति दंष्ट्राकरालानि भयानकानि ।
केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु संदृश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः ॥ २७ ॥

XI-27 are all rapidly rushing into Your terrible mouth of fierce gaping jaws. Some are caught up with half-crushed heads between Your teeth.

यथा नदीनां बहवोऽम्बुवेगाः समुद्रमेवाभिमुखा द्रवन्ति ।
तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा विशन्ति वक्त्राण्यभिविज्वलन्ति ॥ २८ ॥

XI-28 Just as the rivers of torrential waters rapidly rush towards the mouth of the ocean, so all these heroes of the world are helplessly rushing into Your flaming mouths.

यथा प्रदीप्तं ज्वलनं पतङ्गा विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः ।
तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोकास्तवापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगाः ॥ २९ ॥

XI-29 Just as swarms of moths rush headlong for destruction in bright fire with ever-increasing speed, in the same manner, the entire created *beings of this world* are speeding head-long for destruction into Your mouth.

लेलिह्यसे ग्रसमानः समन्ताल्लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः ।
तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो ॥ ३० ॥

XI-30 O Vishnu, You are swallowing and licking all the created existence through Your fiery bright mouths. All the worlds are filled with the blaze of Your Might.

Fierce and terrible are Your lustres, by which this existence is being scorched up.

B (4)—TIME SPIRIT (AKSHYA KAL), THE EXECUTOR OF THE DIVINE PLAN (XI—31 to 34)

We have seen how the Time-Spirit is energising the existence of the lower three worlds. It is not a blind unconsciousness movement of Nature. There is always present a vigilant Divine plan being worked out through this revolving machine of Nature, directly controlled and supervised by the dynamic Lord. Those who acquire Spiritual Vision realise that not a sparrow falls, or a leaf moves without the Divine Will behind The Divine architect conceives the entire plan of existence that is to be, and ideative plan of Divine Wisdom is executed into a solid structure by this Time-Spirit In the human kingdom Karmic Law comes into play, and is worked out by the Time Spirit with the object of further evolution. It teaches a man by bitter experiences and sufferings to lead a moral and spiritual life in order to cross the domain of this Time Spirit Ego-ridden kings and warriors prompted by egoistic motives boast of their might in securing a victory by killing their enemies in war In truth such a victory and destruction is only a pre conceived plan of the Time Spirit of which they were merely instruments, for execution

Lord Krishna discloses this fact to Arjun saying that the kings and warriors with whom he has to fight are destined to be killed according to the Cosmic plan, and that he is to be merely an instrument for execution of that plan Arjun had been treating Lord Krishna as an ordinary human being as a friend and a relation, but when he witnessed the terrible Cosmic Form of Time Spirit standing before him, he got bewildered and felt as though he was under a hallucination, since the familiar figure of his friend Krishna had been replaced by that terrific form Being terribly frightened, he

could not help questioning that Cosmic Form as to who He was.

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्ररूपो नमोऽस्तु ते देववर प्रसीद ।
विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्तमाद्यं न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम् ॥ ३१॥

XI-31 Arjun *enquires :—Please tell me who You are in* this awful fierce form. My humble salutations to You, O great Lord. I seek *Your pleasure, and desire to know* You, the primal God-head. I am unaware of the Nature of Your dynamism.

कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।
ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः ॥ ३२ ॥

XI-32 Lord replied :—I am the Time-Spirit ever intent upon *destruction of the worlds. Here, I am bent upon* destroying the nations. Even without an effort on your part, these warriors arrayed as your adversaries, or destined not to remain alive in future.

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम् ।
मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥ ३३ ॥

XI-33 Therefore, you should stand up, and win the glory of conquest over your enemies, and enjoy an opulent kingdom. All these are already slain by Me. O Arjun, become a mere instrument of conquest.

द्रोणं च भीष्मं च जयद्रथं च कर्णं तथान्यानपि योधवीरान् ।
मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान् ॥ ३४॥

XI-34 *Fearlessly destroy these brave warriors, Drona,* Bhishma, Jayadrath, and others, since they are already slain by Me. You are sure to conquer your enemies in war, and therefore, gird up your loin for battle.

B (5)—ARJUN'S REALISATION OF THE LORD AS TIME-SPIRIT AND HIS PRAYERS TO HIM (XI—35 to 44)

Arjun now realises that the terrible Form of the Time-Spirit that was standing before him, was no other than the dynamic Form of the same Shri Krishna, whom he had been so long treating as an ordinary human friend, guide and relation. Inspite of the repeated previous warnings given by the Lord to him, that He was not an ordinary human being but a Divine Avtar, their truth had not appealed to his heart, although his intellect had taken all that for granted in an abstract way Realisation of Truth does not totally appeal by a mere intellectual conception, unless it is accompanied by an outpouring of emotion from the heart Arjun's heart having been shaken, at potential dynamic Divine Form, time was now ripe for him to supplement his intellectual concept by the emotional conviction of his heart. He could not help expressing his utmost delight on realising as who his companion the Lord Krishna was in reality There was thus a natural outburst of the feelings of his heart in prayers He expressed his extreme regret for having behaved with Him carelessly so long, treating Him as an ordinary human being He entreats the Lord to forgive him for his past behaviour

Sanjaya described to Dhritarashtra this hearty repentance of Arjun for his negligent behaviour with Lord Krishna whom he now realises as the Divine incarnate

एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी ।
नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कृष्णं सगद्गदं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य ॥ ३५ ॥

XI 35 Sanjaya says —Having heard these words of Lord Krishna, Arjun wearing a crown on head, respectfully bowed down before Him trembling with folded hands, and prostrating again and again before Him out of fear, to express his heart's joy to Him.

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।
रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसङ्घाः ॥ ३६ ॥

XI-36 Arjun said —O Krishna, it is but right and proper that the world rejoices and is attracted out of love to You by recitation of Your name and glory, while the Rakshasas are seared away to flight in all directions out of fear, and groups of Siddhas (Liberated devotees) bow down before You in prayers

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन्महात्मन् गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रे ।
अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास त्वमक्षरं सदसत्तत्परं यत् ॥ ३७ ॥

XI-37 O Lofty Spirit, why should they not prostrate before You? You are the origin of Brahma Himself and far superior to all O Eternal Lord of gods, abode of the Universe, You are the Supreme Immutable beyond existence and non-existence

त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराणस्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
वेत्तासि वेद्यं च परं च धाम त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥ ३८ ॥

XI-38 You are the original God head, the sempiternal Purush, You are the Supreme resort of the Cosmos. You are the Knower the Known, and the Supreme Status. O multi-faced Divine, the entire Universe is extended in You

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥ ३९ ॥

XI-39 You are Vayu, Yama (God of death), Varuna (God of oceans), the moon Brahma, the father of creation and even the father of Brahma. Thousand salutations to You and repeated prostrations and prayers are offered to You

नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।
अनन्तवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्वं सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः ॥ ४० ॥

XI-40 Prostrations to You in front, back and on all sides O Mighty Infinite, immeasurable in strength, You are pervading the entire existence, and therefore, everything is nothing but Your Form

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति ।
अजानता महिमानं तवेदं मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि ॥ ४१ ॥

XI-41 Due to my ignorance of Your Might, in whatever way You had been addressed by me as Krishna, as O Yadava, as O friend, out of love or out of unintentional neglect,

यच्चावहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु ।
एकोऽथवाप्यच्युत तत्समक्षं तत्क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम् ॥ ४२ ॥

XI 42 O Invincible Lord, whatever disrespect may have been shown by me to You in jest, while You were resting on bed, while sitting, chatting or taking food, and while alone or in company of others, for all that misconduct I beseech Your forgiveness, O boundless Lord

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव ॥ ४३ ॥

XI 43 You are the father of this world as well as of all movable and immovable creations You are the greatest Master Teacher and most venerable You are the mightiest of the mighty O Incomparable in Might, there is none to equal Your might in these three worlds How can there be another greater than You ?

तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ॥ ४४ ॥

XI-44 Therefore, O venerable Lord, I bow down and prostrate before You imploring Your Grace O Lord, just as father forgives his son, as friend forgives his

friend, and as a lover forgives his beloved, similarly it would be befitting You to forgive me, and tolerate my undesirable behaviour.

C (1)—ARJUN'S DESIRE TO BEHOLD THE BENIGN DIVINE FORM. (XI–45 to 49)

Arjun was no doubt glad at heart to visualise the Cosmic Dynamic Form of the Time-Spirit on realising that it was the Form of Lord Krishna. He, however, found no ease at heart or comforting mental peace. He, therefore, takes courage to beseech the Lord to replace this awe-inspiring vision by the vision of His benign, soothing, and Spiritual Divine Form, adorned with crown and armed with mace and discus in His four protecting arms.

The only way to visualise such a benign Form is by surrender and devotion to the Divine, which secures his protection against all degenerating forces surrounding him on four sides. He then experiences that he is being lifted up in the four arms of the loving and benignant Lord by way of protection from adverse forces. In place of the terrific Form of the Time-Spirit, Arjun visualises the Spiritual Divine Form, benignant, sweet, ecstatic, loving and supremely peaceful with four arms to protect His devotees from all four sides.

The Divine is pervading and presiding over not only the Spiritual planes, but is at the same time intimately concerned with the well-being of the creatures of the lower three worlds. In proportion as one surrenders, devotes and aspires for Divine Grace, exactly in the same proportion, the Divine extends His four arms to protect him from wordly calamities, misfortunes, bereavements, and other afflictions during his life time, and even after death in the domain of the terrible Time-Spirit. Divine Bhakti and prayers smoothen the Karmic Law, and the worst periods of life resulting as a consequence of past Karmas pass away with reduced rigour.

To quote Shri Aurovindo "There is something that makes the heart of the world to rejoice and take pleasure in the name and nearness of the Divine. It is the profound sense of that, which makes us see in the dark face of Kali the face of the Mother, and to perceive even in the midst of destruction, the protecting arms of the Friend of creation, in the midst of evil the presence of a pure unalterable benignity, and in the midst of death the Master of Immortality."

Arjun expresses this feeling of his heart and implores the Lord to reveal to him *His benign Divine Form.*

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे।
तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥ ४५ ॥

XI-45 Arjun says: I rejoice at the sight of what was never seen before, but my mind feels un-nerved out of fright. O All-pervading God of the gods, bestow Grace and Mercy upon me, and be pleased to display Your benign Divine Form.

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्तमिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव।
तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते ॥ ४६ ॥

XI-46 I desire to behold You adorned with crown and armed with mace and discus in hands. O Cosmic Lord, of thousand arms, be pleased to resume Your original Spiritual Form having four protecting arms.

मया प्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनेदं रूपं परं दर्शितमात्मयोगात्।
तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम् ॥ ४७ ॥

XI-47 Lord Krishna replied: O Arjun, it was out of My favour, that this primordial Infinite Cosmic Form has been revealed to you, as it is eternally linked to My Spiritual Self. This Form was never seen before by anybody except yourself.

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानैर्न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिरुग्रैः ।
एवंरूपः शक्य अहं नृलोके द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर ॥ ४८ ॥

XI-48 O Arjun, it had not been possible in this world for anyone except yourself to have a vision of this Cosmic Form, either by the study of Vedas, or by performance of ritualistic Yagnas, or by offering of gifts, or by severe penances or by other operations

मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृङ्ममेदम् ।
व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य ॥ ४९ ॥

XI-49 You need not be terrified at the sight of this awe-inspiring Form, nor need you get confused Cast away *your fear and be of loving heart Now behold this* other Form of Mine

C (2)—VISION OF THE COSMIC PERSONAL DIVINE
(XI—50 & 51)

Sanjaya describes to Dhritarashtra the vision that Lord Krishna then revealed to Arjun

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः ।
आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा ॥ ५० ॥

XI-50 Sanjaya says Vasudeva having thus spoken to Arjun *displayed his four armed Form before him.* The Lord pacified and comforted the terror stricken heart of Arjun by resuming and revealing His benign sweet Form

Arjun expresses his joy at the sight of this Form of the Lord and says

दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तव सौम्यं जनार्दन ।
इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः ॥ ५१ ॥

XI-51 O Janardan, beholding this gentle human Form of Yours, I, having attained peace of mind, have regained my normal natural consciousness.

There are double aspects of the Cosmic manifested Divine: (i) The aspect of Time-Spirit (Kal), the destroyer and renovator of the lower three worlds, and (ii) The aspect of Spiritual benign protector, guide, father, mother, lover and benefactor etc. As Time-Spirit, He has to undertake tremendous operations of destruction and renovation of all created beings, impelled by the inner urge of the involved Cosmic Spirit for self fulfilment and self-expression by evolution This dynamic operation is signified as an activity carrried out by multiple arms of the Time-Spirit That is why the Form of the Time-Spirit is described as multi-armed The other aspect of the Divine as a benign Protector, guide, lover and benefactor, is represented as the four armed loving and pleasing human form He holds a conch in one hand, the roar of which frightens and scares away all adverse forces If however, these devils accept the challenge their heads are chopped off, and bones crushed, by the disc and mace held by the Lord in two other hands. Then comes the flowering of Divine Consciousness in His devotees Such Divine Consciousness: opens like the lotus flower, petal by petal, which the Lord holds in the fourth hand Such is the protection which the Lord offers to His devotees

C (3)—THE WAY AND POSSIBILITY OF DIVINE VISION. (XI—52 to 55)

The only efficient instruments with which a man is equipped for acquiring knowledge either terrestrial or spiritual, are his mind and intellect. But their capacity is so limited that they arrive at a vanishing point when an attempt is made for conception of Cosmic Existence and its inner working Super-conscient higher mental levels of intution, inspiration and revelation, when awakened can

make it somewhat possible to peep into the occult vision of Cosmic dynamism. But the true Spiritual Vision still remains out of reach. One may be enabled to cross the domain of Time-Spirit (Death) on realisation of the causes of his bondage, and attain "Naish-Karma" status in which actions create no bondage. True Divine revelation becomes possible by the awakening of Supra-mental Pragya consciousness by Buddhi Yoga. Attainment of Pragya consciousness opens the door for coming face to face with the Divine. This Divine vision cannot be secured by study of the Vedas, or by offering of gifts, or by performance of Yagnas. The most practical method of awakening the Spiritual, Consciousness is that of unswerving devotion and surrender to the Divine.

The Supreme Spiritual Vision of the Divine constitutes an integral insight of His dynamic as well as Spiritual aspects, which is the greatest reconciling Oneness of the entire existence. To quote Shri Aurovindo, "Man can know by other means this or that exclusive aspect of the One existence, its individual, Cosmic, or world-excluding figures, but not the greatest reconciling Oneness of all the aspects of Divinity, in which at one and the same time, and in one and the same vision, all is manifested, all is exceeded, and all is consummated. This vision can be reached only by absolute adoration, love and intimate unity, that crowns at their summit the fullness of Works and Knowledge. There is a Supreme Consciousness through which it is possible to enter into the glory of the transcendent, and contain in Him the Immutable Self and all mutable Becomings. It is possible to be one with all, yet above all, to exceed the world, and yet embrace the whole Nature at once of the Cosmic and Supra-Cosmic God-head. This is difficult indeed for limited man imprisoned in his mind and body, but the God-head shows the Way in following verses."

सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम ।
देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणः ॥ ५२ ॥

XI-52 The Lord says :—This Form of Mine which you have seen is very difficult for an ordinary man to visualise. The gods themselves ever remain desirous to have a look at it.

नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया ।
शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं दृष्टवानसि मां यथा ॥ ५३ ॥

XI-53 This Form which you have seen, cannot be rendered visible either by intellectual study of Scriptures (vedas), or by austere penances, or by gift-offerings, or by performances of Yagnas.

भक्त्यात्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥ ५४ ॥

XI-54 O Parantap, it is possible to have knowledge and vision of such a Divine Form, and even to secure an entry into His consciousness, by undeviating adoration and love for Me.

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पान्डव ॥ ५५ ॥

XI-55 One who is a Divine worker, who realises Me as the All-Supreme, who is My devotee, who is above worldly attachments, and is freed from malice, hatred, or enmity towards all creatures, such a person ultimately attains Me.

It is of vital importance to notice in this concluding verse of this chapter, the speciality of Geeta's method of Divine approach. It does not advocate renunciation of the world, or abandonment of actions, as a condition precedent to Divine attainment. It, on the other hand, insists on the performance of all actions as a preliminary step though

with a change in the angle of vision. Performance of actions as Divine Work free from attachment and relish for fruit is the cardinal principle of Geeta Yoga. If this practice is accompanied by Divine aspiration, surrender and adoration, the Yogic force of the Divine is ever ready to aid the aspirant in uplifting him in the Spiritual consciousness. The Lord, therefore, insists on His devotee to become a Divine worker (Mat Karma Krat), free from all relish and attachment (Sanga varjitah), and devoid of malice, hatred or enmity towards all creatures. Such activity of the devotee implemented with intense devotion and love to the Supreme enables him to attain the highest Divine Status.

Thus comes to an end the XIth Chapter entitled "Union by the vision of the Universal Divine Form".

CHAPTER XII

A (1)– BHAKTI, THE SUPREME WAY OF DIVINE APPROACH. (XII—1 to 4)

Existence of Cosmic dynamic Divine has been concretely brought home to Arjun by personal experience. He is unable to discard this positive truth, as a delusion, a mental hallucination, or a hypnotic trickery, as proclaimed by the Monistic Philosophy. He has also been told that the static Nirgun Divine Status assumes in manifestation the Cosmic dynamism of Sagun Brahman. Naturally a question arises whether adoration of the personal Sagun Divine is more desirable than the adoration of the Static Nirgum Brahman who is said to be the source of the former. Lord Krishna has laid stress on the adoration of the personal Sagun Divine in the last chapter, even while living and acting in the world as a Divine worker, free from attachment and avarice. This advice is in direct contradiction of the prevalent Monistic belief, that withdrawal from the world and abandonment of all actions, was the sine qua non for Divine attainment. Arjun, therefore, could not help putting direct question to the Lord, as to which of these two kinds of devotees is superior.

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥ १ ॥

XII-1 Arjun says :—Those who worship You as Personal Divine by remaining constantly united in Your thought and those who seek after the unmanifest Immutable, which of these is the superior knower of Yoga.
The Lord's reply was prompt and decisive as follows :

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥ २ ॥

XII-2 The Lord replied: The superior method for attaining Union with Me is of those who worship Me with their minds incessantly centred on Me with intense faith.

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥ ३ ॥

XII-3 Those who seek after the static Akshar Brahman, who is indefinable, unmanifest, omni-present, inconceivable, self-poised, immobile and constant.

संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ ४ ॥

XII-4 By thoroughly subduing their senses, by developing equal-vision all over and rejoicing in the welfare of all created beings, such devotees also attain Me

A (2)—ADORATION OF SAGUN-DIVINE IS EASIER TO PRACTISE THAN THAT OF NIRGUN DIVINE (XII—5 to 8)

The ultimate goal of both kinds of devotees is the same, but the adoration of Sagun-Divine is easier to practise for an embodied being, and is at the same time assisted by the super-natural aid of Divine Grace Both these advantages are missing in the alternate method of unaided struggling effort

To quote Shri Aurovindo—"The Immutable offers no hold to the mind It can only be given by a motionless Spiritual impersonality and silence, and those who follow after it alone have to restrain altogether, and even drawing the action of the mind and senses It must not be thought that because it is more arduous, therefore, it is a higher and more effective process. The easier way of the Geeta leads more rapidly, naturally and normally to the same absolute

liberation. The Yogin of exclusive Knowledge imposes on himself a painful struggle with the manifold demands of his nature He denies them even their highest satisfaction, and cuts away from him even the upward impulses of his spirit, whenever they imply relations or fall short of a negating Absolute The living way of the Geeta on the contrary finds out the most intense upward trend of all our being, and by turning it God-wards, uses Knowledge, will and feeling and the instinct for perfection as so many puissant wings of a mounting liberation '

"The indefinable One-ness…offers no help of relation, and gives no foot-hold to the climber All has to be done by a severe austerity, and a stern and lonely individual effort How different is it for those who seek after the Purushottam in the way of the Geeta? When they meditate on Him with a Yoga which sees all to be Vasudeo, he meets them at every point, in every moment, at all times, with innumerable forms and faces, holds up the lamp of Knowledge within, and floods with its Divine and happy lustre the whole of existence. The other method of a difficult relationless stiffness tries to get away from all actions, even though that is impossible to embodied creatures. In the Geeta-Yoga-method the actions are all given up to the Supreme Master of action, and He as the Supreme Will meets the will of sacrifice, takes from it its burden, and assumes Himself the charge of the works of the Divine Nature in us And when too in the high passion of love, the devotee of the Lover and Friend of man and of all creatures, casts upon Him all his heart of consciousness and yearning of delight, then swiftly the Supreme comes to him as a saviour, and exalts him by a happy embrace of his mind and heart and body out of the waves of the sea of death in the mortal nature into the secure bosom of the Eternal This then is the swiftest, largest, greatest way'

The Lord thus discloses these points of superiority in the adoration of Personal Sagun Divine, so far as practice of Divine approach is concerned.

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥ ५ ॥

XII-5 Those *inclined* to *seek after* the unmanifest Divine, experience great difficulty in their attempt, because the unmanifest Divine Status is too difficult for an embodied being to attain.

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥ ६ ॥

XII-6 Those who worship Me by unswerving *meditation* for Union with Me, *dedicating* all *their actions*, and *surrendering their whole being to Me,*

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥ ७ ॥

XII-7 O Parth, for such devotees, whose consciousness ever remains absorbed in Me, I act as a sound liberator to quickly deliver them out of the ocean of death-bound existence.

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥ ८ ॥

XII-8 Therefore, absorb your mind solely in Me, and repose your intellect entirely in My thought, then undoubtedly you will abide in Me above this mortal existence.

B (1)—DIFFICULTIES OF THE DIVINE PATH AND THEIR SOLUTION. (*XII—9 to 12*)

The Lord has advised Arjun to contemplate upon Him with complete absorption of mind and intellect. Since an ordinary human being may *find it difficult to do so*, the Lord discloses gradual stages of practice to achieve that end

step by step Contemplation on the Divine with absorption of mind and intellect in Him is the highest stage which only a very advanced devotee can practise with success Thus if one finds it difficult to pursue this effort, he must not lose heart, but should persist assiduously in continuing practice of such contemplation inspite of temporary failures Shri Aurovindo says that "on this way too there are difficulties, for there is the Lower Nature with its fierce or dull downward gravitation, which resists and battles against the motion of ascent, and clogs the wings of the exaltation and the upward rapture There are nights of long exile from the Light, there are hours or moments of revolt, doubt or failure But still by the practice of union and by constant repetition of the experience, the Divine consciousness grows upon the b ing, and takes permanent possession of the nature "

If the devotee finds it difficult to continue such practice with any ostensible progress on account of vibratory condition of fleeting mind, he is advised to allow the mind to indulge in performance of works of daily routine of life as usual, but with a psychological change in the outlook of his motive His personal motive in performance of action must then be replaced by Divine motive and he must consider all his actions as prompted and executed by the Divine through the instrumentality of his body He should thus inculcate the practice of becoming a Divine worker, which in the long run is sure to bring him the desired perfection To quote Shri Aurovindo, "If this is also found too difficult because of the power and persistence of the outward-going movement of the mind, then the way is simple, to do all actions for the sake of the Lord of the action, so that every outward-going movement of the mind shall be associated with the inner Spiritual truth of the being, and called back even in the very movement to the eternal reality and connected with its source Then the presence of the Purushottam will grow upon the natural man, till he is filled with it and becomes a God-head and a Spirit."

In case the devotee finds even this practice too difficult to continue with any advantage, due to the strong egoistic pull of his nature, he is advised to continue to perform all actions as before, but by renouncing all attachments to their resultant fruit. His *ego may continue to control his actions, but since success or failure is never within its* control, he should surrender fruits of actions *to the* Divine who is the Master of Universal action, and the controller of man's fate This is the Master key to gradually dissolve the impulses of ego to control the motive power of action, and to replace ego's mastery by Divine Mastery in all his works Shri Aurovindo says, "*The limited mind in its forgetfulness turns to the act and its outward object,* and will *not* remember to look within and lay our every movement on the Divine altar of the Spirit Then the way is to control the lower self in the act, and do works without desire of the fruit. All fruit has to be renounced, to be *given* up to *the power that directs the work, and yet the work has to* be done that *is* imposed by it on the nature For by these means the obstacles steadily diminishes and easily disappears, the mind is left free to remember the Lord, and to fix *itself* in the liberty of the Divine consciousness". The Lord *thus refers to these difficulties* of Sadhana (Practice), and points out gradual steps to climb the Divine ladder

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।
अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनंजय ॥ ९ ।

XII-9 The Lord says – If you are unable to keep your consciousness steadily fixed on Me, then O Dhananjaya, take to the practice of *attaining Union with* Me (Abhyas Yogen)

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव ।
मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि । १० ॥

XII-10 If you are unable to continue such practice, then

transform yourself into a Divine worker, for even by doing all works for My sake, you shall attain perfection.

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥ ११ ॥

XII 11 If you find it beyond your capacity even to be a Divine worker, then renounce all fruits of action by control of your lower self and surrender of your entire being for Union with Me

Practical solution of these difficulties

The Lord has spoken about the various stages of progress towards the attainment of Spiritual Status in descending order *i e.* from the highest to the lowest, in the last three verses Now for the purpose of actual practice, He takes the devotee from the lowest stage to the highest in an ascending order He emphasises the profound importance of the lowest initial stage of renunciation of fruit, since it builds a strong foundation to erect a sound Spiritual structure, and to secure a swift and an assured success in the practices of other progressive stages Verse 12 refers to the superiority of fruit renunciation to all other obviously higher stages of practice, and thus presents a paradoxical dilemma in the mind of an intellectualist *This dilemma disappears if he enters into the spirit of the teaching intended* for training a novice to ascend the divine path from the lowest rung of the ladder to the highest. It does not refer to the superiority of the initial stage of fruit-renunciation over even the highest stage of Divine contemplation with total absorption of mind, from the standpoint of their intrinsic merit, but from the standpoint of facility of practice

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानाद्ध्यानं विशिष्यते ।
ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥ १२ ॥

XII-12 The Lord thus says —Divine Knowledge is superior to the practice of mental Divine contemplation, Medita-

tion is better than Krowledge, and renunciation of fruits of action is superior to even meditation, because it brings about Peace in the long run

C (1)—BEHAVIOUR OF TRUE BHAKTA (DEVOTEE)

(XII—13 to 19)

Geeta does not advocate renunciation of action, or withdrawal from the world to enable one to succeed on the path of love and Bhakti for Divine attainment Path of love is said to be easier for Divine approach, when compared with the tortuous way of mortifying penances It enjoins upon one to adopt an ideal way of living in loving contact with all beings and the Divine The practice of renouncing fruits of action to God has to be supplemented by such ideal human conduct in life, in order to come in tune with the Divine Will and to become a true Divine Worker

God reciprocates intense love of His devotee, and accepts him in His embrace by total *fusion and union in His own* Being This was the personal experience of Radha and Gopis, besides other Bhaktas like Mira, Shri Chaitanya and many others Shri Chaitanya experienced completed *fusion of his personality in the Divine,* and proclaimed himself as Krishna incarnate Such Bhaktas lose sense even of their personal existence and move about intoxicated with Divine love and Divine bliss The behaviour of some of them being out of the common run has the appearance of a maniac in the eyes of an intellectualist Some of them maintain proper balance of mind, and lead an exemplary life possessed of intution, inspiration and even revélation. Shri Ram Krishna Paramhansa, Shri Vivekananda, Shri Aurovindo, Mahatma Gandhi and many others are living examples of such Bhaktas On a strict scrutiny of their behaviour in life, we find that it satisfies the standard of the conduct of a Bhakta prescribed by the Geeta in this Chapter Shri Krishna Prem in the "Yoga of Bhagwat Gita", observes

that, "Too often is the path of Bhakti mistaken for an abandonment to a frothy uncontrolled emotionalism What the real path of Bhakti is, may be seen from a study of these verses from 13 to the end. The qualities enumerated must be built into his character by the disciple"

According to Geeta the path of Divine Bhakti culminates in the likeness of Divine potentiality both Spiritual and Dynamic, by integration of the principles of Karma Yoga and Gyan Yoga, in the character of the Bhakta A true Bhakta is thus not only an emotional lover of the Divine but is also a true Divine worker possessed of Divine Wisdom

The Lord now describes the natural characteristics of a Bhakta in the conduct of his life

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥ १३ ॥

XII-13 That devotee is dear to Me,

(1) who bears no ill will towards any being,

2 who is friendly and compassionate to all,

(3) who has no attachments and is devoid of egoism,

(4) who is balanced in pleasure and pain and is forgiving,

संतुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ १४ ॥

XII-14

(5) who is ever self-satisfied,

(6) who is self-controlled and resolute, and

(7) who has dedicated his mind and reason to Me

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः ।
हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः ॥ १५ ॥

XII-15 That devotee is dear to Me,
(8) by whom the world is not afflicted, and who also is not afflicted by the world, and
(9) who is liberated from the agitation caused by pleasure or pain or fear.

अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ १६ ॥

XII-16 That devotee is dear to Me,
(10) who desires nothing worldly,
(11) who is pure in mind and body,
(12) who is an expert Divine Worker,
(13) who is indifferent to whatever comes,
(14) who is not afflicted by any happening, and
(15) who has given up all egoistic personal initiative for action, but allows the Divine initiative to guide his life's activity.

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥

XII-17 That devotee is dear to Me,
(16) who neither desires the pleasant nor rejoices at its touch, nor abhors the unpleasant,
(17) who neither grieves nor feels a desire for anything, and
(18) who has abolished the distinction between fortunate and unfortunate happenings.

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥ १८ ॥

XII-18 That devotee is dear to Me,
(19) who does not discriminate between friend or foe, honour or dishonour, heat or cold, pleasure or pain,
(20) who has abolished all attachments and relish for objects,

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी संतुष्टो येन केनचित् ।
अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥ १९ ॥

XII-19

(21) who is balanced in praise or censor,
(22) who maintains silence of mind and speech.
(23) who is ever content with whatever little he has,
(24) who has no charm of possessiok,
(25) who is firm in mind, and
(26) who is full of devotion to Me.

C (2)—IMMORTALISING DHARMA OF A BHAKTA (DHARMYAMRITAM). (XII—20)

The principles which should govern the conduct of life and behaviour of a Bhakta as enumerated above, are not mere enforced moral principles. They are imbued with the Spiritual character, which naturally stream forth in the conduct and behaviour of one, who has awakened his inner self, and consequently whose activity in life, emerges out of his Spiritual Nature. Such conduct becomes his natural law of action (Dharma) propelled by the Spiritual Nature of his inner Self.

We have to realise that the leading of a Spiritual life by a devotee is not so much a question of perfecting a pattern of behaviour, as of purifying the springs of motive. It is the motive which is the life impulse of an action. A perfection of pattern of conduct without purification of motive, is like an artificial flower, good and attractive to look at, but without emitting any fragrance. If the pattern of life does not spring from the natural source of inner Self, it does not have the fragrance of Spiritual life in it. That which is Spiritual is the Supremely natural faculty of the self. The pattern of behaviour of a Bhakta becomes his natural behaviour, only if he has developed true love and devotion to the Divine. Otherwise it remains only an enforced moral code with no Spiritual backing in it. By

such devotion and love to the Divine, the Bhakta brings richness of Eternity in the routine activities of his life, since he ascends from the bondage of Time existence to the Eternal Timelessness (Amratatava) of the Supreme Divine Such conduct ot life's activities by a Bhakta is spoken of as his immortalising Dharma, or the law of action which secures immortal status to him

To quote Shri Aurovindo, "Dharma in the language of the Geeta means the innate law of the being, and of its works in action, proceeding from and determined by the inner nature (Swabhao Niyatam- Karma) In the ignorant cons ciousness of mind, life, and body, there are many Dharmas, many rubs, many standards and laws, because there are many varying determinations and types of the mental, vital, and physical nature The immortal Dharma (Dharmya Mritam) is one, it is that of the highest spiritual divine cons ciousness, and its powers are Para-Prakriti It is beyond the three Gunas, and to reach it, all these lower Dharmas have to be abandoned (Sarva dharman parityajya) Alone in their place, the o e liberating unifying consciousnes, and power of the Eternal has to become the infinite source of action, its mould, determinant, and exemplar To rise out of our lower personal egoism, to enter into the impersonal and equal calm of the immutable Eternal, all pervading Akshar Purush, to aspire from that calm by a perfect self surrender of all one s nature and existence, that which is other and higher than the Akshar is the first necessity of his Yoga In the strength of that aspiration one can rise to the immortal Dharma There made one in being, cons- ciousness and Divine bliss with the gteatest Uttama Purush, made one with His Supreme Dynamic Nature-Force, the liberated spirit can know infinitely, love illimitably, act unfalterably, in the authentic power of a highest immor tality and a perfect freedom"

The Lord speaks about His love to those devotees who follow the code of life's conduct referred to in the above

verses. But He intensely loves those who develop those principles as natural out-pouring of their Immortal Selves, surrendering their entire being to the Divine.

ये तु धर्म्यामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते ।
श्रद्दधाना मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः ॥ २० ॥

XII-20. The Lord says :—But exceedingly dear to Me are those devotees, who make Me their one Supreme aim, and follow out with a perfect faith and surrender the Immortalising Dharma described in the aforesaid verses.

Thus comes to an end Chapter XII styled as "Bhakti Yoga".

CHAPTER XIII

A (1)—KNOWLEDGE OF KSHETRA AND KSHETRAGYA (MATTER & SPIRIT) (XIII—1 & 2)

Arjun has visualised concrete Form of the Cosmic Divine both in His mortalising Time-aspect as well as in His immortalising Spiritual aspect Realisation of both aspects is stressed upon as the ultimate goal of a devotee A code of conduct has been laid down for guidance of his life's activities to enable him to cross the bondages of the Time-aspect Intense love with devotion and surrender to the Sagun Divine has been advocated as the Royal Path for attainment of integral Divine consciousness A pragmatic man however finds it hard to follow the ideal behaviour prescribed for a devotee He has not to practise it as an enforced moral code, but has to assimilate it in his nature, in order that it may spring forth most naturally from his inner Spiritual source, and not from the artificially repressed lower nature of ego, mind and desires

As an embodied being a man is normally controlled by the lower natural tendencies of his mental and desire bodies In order to transform this mortalising lower nature into the immortalising Spiritual Nature, it becomes necessary to investigate into the structure of the embodiment (Kshetra) which he occupies, and also into its relations with the indwelling Spirit (Kshetragya), which energises it for action Knowledge resulting from such investigation is in fact the true Knowledge of our embodied existence, and of the main springs of action working within it The subtler sources of egoistic trend of nature can by this knowledge be replaced by the Spiritual source, in order to enable the devotee to follow that prescribed ideal code of life as a natural out-pouring of his Spirit, it is then that his body becomes a true Dharma-Kshetra in the Kurukshetra of this world.

Arjun is naturally desirous to learn about the intricate working of his body and the in-dwelling Spirit. In some texts of the Geeta this question has been specifically put in the mouth of Arjun as the first verse of this Chapter as follows :—

Arjun says: I am desirous to learn from You the distinction between Prakriti and Purush, between Kshetra and Kshetragya, and between Knowledge and the object of Knowledge.

The concise reply of the Lord is as follows :

XIII-1 The Lord says :—O Kaunteya, this body is described as Kshetra, and that which cognizes and experiences it is described as Kshetragya by sages, the knowers of essential principles.

XIII-2 Know Me as the Kshetragya in all Kshetras. The knowledge of Kshetra and Kshetragya is in My opinion the True Knowledge.

A (2)—CONSTITUTION OF HUMAN BODY (KSHETRA) (XIII—3 to 6)

Human body is a complex structure of not only the exterior physical body, but also of the subtle astral and mental bodies involved within. Physical body is merely a vehicle of action impelled by the inner drive of these subtle bodies. It is constituted of five kinds of inert physical matter, namely earth, water, air, heat, and ether, and is energised into activity by the desire and mental body. These subtle bodies derive vitality from the Spiritual nature of the Self who is the presiding deity seated in the hearts of all creatures. As described in Taitriya Upnishad, the Self descends down in all the parts of the being, and acts as a causal Purush in the causal body of ego, as mental Purush in the mental body, as vital Purush in the vital body, and as a physical Purush in the physical body. These three bodies follow the laws of their respective planes. Mental body follows

the law of the mental world, desire body follows the law of the desire world, and physical body follows the law of physical world. They create mental, vital and physical disturbances which appear pell mell into the physical body Most prominent upheavals arise from the mental sensations of pleasure and pain, and from vital sensations of desire and aversion sometimes appearing as chronic illnesses Knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the physical body alone fails to detect the cause of these disturbances because some of them have their origin in the desire body and some in the mental body For a perfect knowledge of human system, it becomes necessary to probe into the inner working of all the three bodies that constitute the Kshetra

The totality of the Kshetra consisting of physical, astral and mental body, is constituted of twenty four principles of nature (Tatvas)

1) Physical body consists of five Mahabhutas namely ether, air, heat, liquid and solid together with their respective five qualities of sound, touch, form, taste and smell (Tanmatras) Physical body is also equipped with five limbs (Karma indriyas), for experiencing these subtle qualities

(2) Pranamaya Kosha or desire body consists of five organs of knowledge (Gyanendriyas, the sensory powers of hearing touching, seeing, tasting and smelling, which operate through the physical ear, skin, eyes, tongue and nose Five pranas are also included as essential ingredient of this body

(3) Mental body consists of mind and intellect which operate as cognition, intelligence, discrimination, reasoning etc through the physical brain

(4) Causal body consists of ego and consciousness which it radiates through the mental, vital and physical bodies

To quote Shri Aurovindo, 'Mind is used to connote specially the part of the nature which has to do with cognition, intelligence, with ideas, mental and thought perceptions, the reactions of thought to things, with the truly mental movements and formations, mental vision and will etc, that are part of intelligence. The vital is the life nature made up of desires, sensations, feelings, passions, energies of action, will of desire, reaction of desire-soul in man, and of all that play of possessive and other related instincts, anger, fear, greed, lust etc, that belong to this field of nature Mind and vital are mixed up on the surface of consciousness, but they are quite separate forces in themselves As soon as one gets behind the surface consciousness, one sees them as separate, and can with the aid of knowledge analyse their surface mixtures The mind may accept the Divine, while the vital in unconvinced and unsurrendered, and goes on obstinately on its way of desire, passion, and attraction Their division or conflict is the cause of the actual difficulties of Sadhana"

The Lord now deals with the constituent ingredients of Kshetra and with the subtle energies that energise and create disturbance in the human embodiment

XIII-3 The Lord says —Hear from Me in brief what that Kshetra is, and what are its characteristics, nature, source and deformations, and what He is, and what His powers are

XIII-4 It has been sung by the Rishis in manifold ways in various inspired verses, and also by the Brahma Sutras with decisive and well reasoned analysis

There is a divergence of opinion among the great thinkers of India regarding the constituent ingredients of Kshetra, but Brahma Sutra has dealt with the subject with a decisive and well reasoned analysis

XIII-5 Five physical elements (Mahabhutas), ego intellect, unmanifest Nature, ten senses and one mind, and five objects of senses (Tanmatras) along with,

XIII-6 desire, aversion, pleasure and pain, grouping together (Sanghat) by the co-hesive principle of nature (Dhrati), are briefly described, as constituting the Kshetra and causes of its modifications (Savikaram)

There are many disturbing causes arising from the mental and vital bodies as stated before, but only the most prominent of them have been mentioned here

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A(3)—KNOWLEDGE FOR CONSECRATION OF KSHETRA (XIII—7 *to* 11)

Nature of the Lower Mental, astral, and the Tamsic physical bodies is highly degenerating, polluting and deforming It dominates the external surface level of these bodies resulting in persistent and obstinate out-burst of various kinds of evil and sinful activities There are calm, peaceful and purer inner levels of these bodies, which are not effected by this lower nature. Inner physical, Inner vital, and Inner mental levels of these bodies are governed by Spiritual Nature, but they are still dormant to us for all practical purposes Once they are awakened to control activities of life, they transform a man into a universal being and a Divine worker and makes him a suitable receptacle for Divine Consciousness of the Kshetragya, the Self dwelling within His activities of life then originate from his immortalising Spiritual Nature and not from the mortalising lower nature Such transformation results by development of the Spiritual Knowledge for eradicating the causes of deformation of the Kshetra by the external mind and senses He thus becomes cognisant of the true nature of Kshetra as the field of action of the in dwelling Kshetragya

Shri Aurovindo says that ' When the knower of the field turns from the field itself to learn of himself within it, and of all that is behind its appearances, that real knowledge

begins (gyanam), the true knowledge of the field no less than of the knower. For both soul and nature are the Brahman, but the true truth of the world of nature can only be discovered by the liberated sage, who possesses also the truth of the Spirit One Brahman, one reality in Self and Nature is the object of all knowledge The Geeta then tells us what is the Spiritual Knowledge, or rather it tells us what are the conditions of knowledge, the marks, the signs of the man whose soul is turned towards the inner Wisdom First there comes a certain moral condition, a Satvic government of the natural being'

Lord Krishna now proceeds to describe the Satvic qualities that a man should develop in order to attain true knowledge of his Kshetra, and to enable him to realise the indwelling Kshetragya

XIII-7 The Lord says —Absence of pride, unpretentiousness, non injury to others, forgiveness, candidness, reverence towards spiritual teachers, purity of mind and body, steadfastness, self control,

XIII 8 non attachment to sense objects, freedom from egoism and from all clingings of the mind, insight into the evil of birth, death, old age and sickness,

XIII-9 non-attachment and absence of self identification with son, wife or home, and constant balance of mind in pleasant or unpleasant happenings,

XIII-10. unflinching devotion to Me by one pointed Yoga, resort to a place of solitude, disinclination towards contact with assemblies of men,

XIII-11 constant communion with Spiritual Knowledge, and the vision of the Divine as the essential object of Divine Wisdom. All these are spoken of as Knowledge, while all that is contrary is Ignorance.

B (1)—KSHETRAGYA, THE ALL-PERVADING DIVINE (XIII—12 to 18)

Kshetragya is the Eternal unmanifest Purushottam, comprehending the manifested Cosmic Akshar and Kshar Purush, as well as multiple individual Purush (Jivatma). These three aspects of the Supreme Divine are briefly referred to in the following verses.

(1) Kshetragya as Supreme Purushottam

The Supreme Purush is the eternal Spiritual Status, and being unmanifest cannot be denoted as either existent or non-existent. He assumes a positive existence when He manifests as Cosmic Akshar and Kshar Purush. Being eternal, He has no beginning or end.

XIII-12. The Lord says :—I will disclose to you that ultimate goal of knowledge (Gyeya), realising which one attains Immortal Blissful State. He is the beginningless Supreme Brahman, who cannot be said to be either existent or non-existent.

(2) Kshetragya as Cosmic Purush

In manifestation, the Supreme Purushottam assumes a positive existence as Akshar and Kshar Purush. As the Cosmic Kshar Purush, He is said to assume a Cosmic Body known as Virat Purush, having Cosmic mind, Cosmic senses and Cosmic Body for experiencing the world movement. Individual beings possess special organs of senses in their bodies for world experience. But these sense organs draw all their powers of mind, senses and body from the Cosmic mind, Cosmic senses and Cosmic body of the Virat Purush, who has no such special organs. He sees through all the eyes, hears through all the ears, tastes through all the tongues, smells through all the noses and touches through all the physical bodies. Special faculties of our senses thus entirely

depend on their receptive capacity from the Cosmic sense faculties of the Virat Purush, who sees through the eyes, but whom the eye does not see, who hears through the ear, but whom the ear does not hear, who thinks through the mind but whom the mind cannot think. He is the Unseen Seer, the unheard Hearer, the unthought Thinker. Other than He there is no Seer, no Hearer, no Thinker. It is the inner Ruler, the Death-less (Brahma Aranyak Upnishad III-7, 23)

The Cosmic Purush supports everything, as He holds all forms within Himself. Witnessing all, He is attached to naught, so that experiences of pleasure and pain are undifferentiated in His impartial gaze. Although He is the enjoyer of Gunas through individual beings, He remains unattached to them being Nirgun by nature. This aspect of Kshetragya as Cosmic Purush is briefly described by the Lord in the following verses.

XIII-13. The Lord says :—He (Virat Purush) has hands and feet all over, has head, mouth, eyes and ears everywhere. He exists enveloping the worlds within Himself.

XIII-14. He is resplendent with all sense faculties and their qualities though devoid of sense organs. He supports the entire existence free from all attachments, and experiences all Gunas inspite of being Nirgun or immune from the Gunas.

(3) Kshetragya as Individual selves (Jivas)

The Cosmic Divine macrocosm further manifests as individual microcosm (Jiva). This individual self possesses all the potentiality of the Cosmic and supra-Cosmic macrocosm. He can evolve himself as the Cosmic Purush as well as the Supra-Cosmic Purushottam, by following the principles of Karma-Yoga, Gyan-Yoga and Bhakti-Yoga. He is imperceptible to the human eye though dwelling nearest to him in his heart on account of extreme subtlety.

XIII-15. The Lord says :—The Cosmic Kshetragya is within and without all created beings, whether movable or immovable. By reason of subtlety, He is imperceptible though nearest in the hearts of creatures, and is also farthest away pervading throughout the illimitable Cosmos.

XIII-16. Though indivisible, He is seated in the hearts of all creatures as though divided and separate from others. That Kshetragya the ultimate goal of knowledge, is the Creator, preserver and renovator of the entire created existence.

In this multiple creation the Kshetragya manifests as Divine knowledge (Vigyan) which is the source of all worldly and Spiritual knowledge, or the Light of all lights. He is the Vigyanmaya-Kosh of an individual which when awakened transports him in Divine Wisdom far beyond the dark ignorance of lower nature. He also presides over the Anandmaya-Kosh as Divine microcosm (Jiva) the desideratum of Divine Wisdom.

XIII-17. He is the Light of all lights and luminous beyond all the darkness of our ignorance. He is Knowledge, and the object of knowledge. He is seated in the hearts of all.

XIII-18. Thus the Kshetra (Field), Gyan (knowledge), and Jyeya, the object of knowledge have been briefly described by Me. Being equipped with this Knowledge, My devotee attains Union with My being and My nature.

B (2)—INTERACTION OF INDIVIDUAL KSHETRAGYA (JIVA) WITH PRAKRITI (XIII—19 & 20)

The Cosmic Sat-chidanand manifests as the individual self-consciousness and also as Cosmic Energy of Nature out of His Chit aspect. Purush and Prakriti are thus inseparable companions in manifestation. Prakriti is the Cosmic Energy creating, preserving and destroying the multiple

depend on their receptive capacity from the Cosmic sense faculties of the Virat Purush, who sees through the eyes, but whom the eye does not see, who hears through the ear, but whom the ear does not hear, who thinks through the mind but whom the mind cannot think. He is the Unseen Seer, the unheard Hearer, the unthought Thinker. Other than He there is no Seer, no Hearer, no Thinker. It is the inner Ruler, the Death-less (Brahma Aranyak Upnishad III-7, 23)

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The Cosmic Sat chidanand manifests as the individual self-consciousness and also as Cosmic Energy of Nature out of His Chit aspect Purush and Prakriti are thus inseparable companions in manifestation Prakriti is the Cosmic Energy creating, preserving and destroying the multiple

existence. It is the main active principle which energises all created beings into action Purush, the subjective being is not directly active but imparts and lords over the activity of the Prakriti. He indirectly experiences the dynamism worked out by the Prakriti in the world uneffected by its pleasant or upleasant experiences. The eternally inseparable Purush and Prakriti is symbolically conceived as inseparable Shiv and Shakti, half male and half female constituting one body (Ardh-Narishvar) Shri Aurovindo says that "the Soul and Nature are only two aspects of the Eternal Brahman, an apparent reality which founds the operation of His Universal existence *Nature creates* and acts, the Soul enjoys her creation and actions, but in this *inferior form she turns this enjoyment into* the obscure and petty figures of pain and pleasure"

In order to experience and impartially enjoy the Divine Play (Lila) in the multiple existence, the Jivatma is equipped with four inner senses constituted of ego, consciousness (Chitta), intellect and mind called Antah-karan, the chief source of all mental initiations of action (Sankalpa) He is also equipped with ten outer senses (Vahya karan), five of *knowledge and five of action to execute mental initiations* of various types of actions for enjoyment of sense objects. It is the function of the Prakriti (nature) to energise these implement of action, but the Purush, the Jiva remains indifferent and inactive, though indirectly supporting, witnessing and enjoying the play of nature

XIII-19 The Lord thus says :—You should know that Purush and Prakriti are both without beginning and are Eternal All agitations and disturbances in the body as well, as the Gunas have their origin in Prakriti

XIII-20 Prakriti is said to be the cause of the interaction of senses upon sense objects Purush is declared to be the experiencer of pleasure and pain

B (3)—KSHETRAGYA AS INDIVIDUAL JIVA IN TWO POISES (XIII-21 to 23)

Geeta now proceeds to describe the subjective aspect of Cosmic Kshetragya as seated in the hearts of all Kshetras as Jiva in two poises called Higher Self and Lower Self.

1. Jivatma, the Individual Higher Self.

Jivatma is the Divine microcosm seated in the hearts of human beings. He is an eternal portion of the Divine, and though an individual, feels inseparable Unity with Him. To quote Shri Aurovindo, "Jivatma is the unborn who presides over the individual being and its developments, associated with it but above it, and who by the very nature of His existence knows himself as Universal and Transcendent, no less than individual, and feels the Divine to be his origin, the truth of his being, the master of his nature, the very stuff of his existence. He is plunged in the Divine, and one with the Eternal for ever. But according to Advaita of Maya-vadins, this Jivatma like the Ishwar Himself is simply an appearance of the Brahman in illusory Maya There is no Ishwar, Lord of the world, because there is no world except in Maya, so too there is no Jivatma, only the Paramatma illusorily perceived as an individual self by the illusory consciousness in Maya. Those on the other hand, who wish to unite with the Ishwar, regard the Jiva either as a separate being dependent on the Ishwar, or as something one in essence with Him, yet different, but this difference like the essential, oneness is eternal."

Jivatma resides in our bodies as the higher Purush, upholds our lower personality from above, as an impartial observer, sanction giver, supporter, enjoyer of world contacts, and as Supreme Lord of our nature. He is above the Trigunas of Prakriti, is superior to birth and death, and is the eternal Central Being of an individual. In the words of Shri Aurovindo, "the Jiva is realised as the Individual Self, Atma, the Central Being above Nature, calm,

untouched by the movements of nature, but supporting their evolution though not involved in it. Through this realisation, silence, freedom, wideness, mastery, purity, a sense of universality in the individual as one centre of this Divine Universality, become the normal experience".

2. The Individual lower Purush or Antaratma, or Pratyak Atma.

Jivatma does not directly experience the world contact of nature, but enjoys the Universe as His Lila through His representative, the lower self. To quote Shri Aurovindo "The Jivatma has a representative power in the individual nature here. This power is the Purush upholding the Prakriti—mere instrumentally in the mind, vital and physical being and nature. As for the Purush, it is there on all planes. There is a mental Purush, a vital Purush and a physical Purush. One may say that these are projections of the Jivatma, put there to uphold Prakriti on various levels of the being. The Higher Purush-Jivatma is unborn and eternal, although upholding this manifested personality from above. This lower self is realised as the Purush behind the heart. It is not universalised like the Jivatma, but is the individual soul supporting from its place behind the heart centre, the mental, vital and physical evolution of the being in Nature. Its realisation brings Bhakti, self-giving, surrender, turning of all movements God-wards, discrimination and choice of all that belongs to the Divine Truth, Good, Beauty, rejection of all that is false, evil. ugly, discordant, union through love and sympathy with all existence, and openness to the Truth of the Self and the Divine."

XIII-21. The Lord says : The Purush dwelling in the lower nature, experiences the impacts of Gunas born of Nature. On account of his attachments to the Gunas, he becomes subject to recurrence of births in good or evil wombs.

XIII-22. The higher Purush is seated in this body as an impartial witness, and sanction-giver, upholder of the work of Nature, her enjoyer and Almighty Lord, and is also described as the Supreme soul (Paramatma).

XIII-23. He who thus knows Purush and Prakriti with her qualities, does not any more remain subject to re-births inspite of his continuously performing all actions.

C (1)—SELF-REALISATION IS THE FIRST STAGE FOR INTEGRAL KSHETRAGYA REALISATION (XIII—24 & 25)

Kshetragya is the All-comprehending Spirit, comprising (i) the unmanifest Supreme Purushottam, (ii) the manifest Cosmic Purush, as well as (iii) individual Purushas or Jivas. A man being an individual Purush, it is indispensable for him first to realise his own self in order to approach the Cosmic Purush and the Supreme Purushottam. The subjective aspect of the Cosmic Kshetragya is the Cosmic Soul or Vishwa-atma, while Jivatma, the individual Purush is His microcosm inherent with all Divine potentialities. On self-realisation, the individual becomes capable of universalising himself as the Cosmic Purush. Various methods have been discovered by ancient Seers to achieve self-realisation.

Some realise the Self by purification of lower self and intense meditation. Some visualise Him by the method of Sankhya Yoga by disassociation and non-co-operation of self with the play of nature. Some realise Him by the method of Karma Yoga in which personal will is substituted by the Divine Will, and the aspirant realises himself as a mere mechanical instrument for execution of that will. The Divine thus assumes charge of the entire being of the aspirant and all his actions are then guided and controlled by the Divine Will.

XIII-24. The Lord says :—Some behold the self in their own being through the purified lower self by intense

meditation. Others realise Him by Sankhya Yoga method, and some by Karma Yoga method.

XIII-25. Others who are ignorant of these paths attempt to realise the self by hearing about Him from Spiritual teachers and by moulding their life accordingly. Even those devoted to learn about self from others, cross over this mortal existence.

C (2)—REALISATION OF THE COSMIC KSHETRAGYA DIVINE—PARAMESHWAR AND ISHWAR ASPECT (XIII—26 to 29)

The entire existence is the result of inseparable combination of Spirit and Matter or Kshetra and Kshetragya. The Cosmic Purush (Kshetragya) is not only the subjective aspect of Atma, but is also Atma-Shakti. Atma is inactive, but consciously enjoys the world play through His Atma-Shakti. The Cosmic energy inherent in the Cosmic Divine is mythologically described as the Divine consort, the Vishveshwari, the Universal Mother. This energy inherent in the unmanifested Supreme Purushottam is described as Adya-Shakti. With respect to the manifested Cosmic Sat-chidananda she is Maha-Saraswati, the consort of Brahma, Maha-Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, and Maheshwari, the consort of the Maheshwar Shiva They wield various powers necessary for the creation, preservation and renovation of existence.

Shri Aurovindo says that Mother is the Adya-Shakti, Supreme consciousness and Power above the Universe. By Her all gods are manifested including the Supra-mental Ishwar. She is the Supreme Divine consciousness in Purushottam. She carries the Supreme in Herself, and manifests the Divine through Akshar and Kshar. In regard to Akshar, She is Para-Prakriti holding the Purush immobile in Herself, and also Herself immobile. In regard to Kshar, She is the mobile Cosmic Energy manifesting all

beings and forces. She is the mediator between the Eternal One and manifested Many. She is both involutory and liberating evolutory power, but She is not lower Prakriti or Avidya-Shakti. She is Divine consciousness, Power, Light, Para Prakriti, to whom we turn for release and Divine fulfilment.

Cosmic Purush as the consort of this Atma-Shakti is described as Iswar who dwells uniformly and acts universally in the created existence through the Universal Mother. The immobile Supreme Purush, the consort of the immobile Atma-Shakti. Adya Shakti is described as Parameshwar, who also exists and works out the existence universally through the Ishwar and His Cosmic Energy.

We must, therefore, realise that it is Prakriti, the Cosmic Energy that is the source of all universal activities including our own activities in the conduct of life. Our self though the Lord of Nature is inactive and unconcerned with the good or evil results of our actions. Realising that it is the Parameshwar or immobile aspect of the Supreme and also the Ishwar, the mobile aspect of the Cosmic Purush, uniformly pervading the Universal activity, we must feel that all our actions and all world actions originate from the Divine source over which we have no control. We must, not therefore, degrade and mortify our Divine self by arrogating to ourselves responsibility of all our actions as the principal actor, and thereby to involve Him in the Cosmic wheel of births and deaths. With this knowledge prominently in view, a man attains the highest Divine Status.

Shri Aurovindo says in Chapter VII of Synthesis of Yoga that "Our action arises, as we ourselves have emerged, out of a universality of which we are not aware; we give it a shape by our personal temperament, personal mind and will of thought or force of impulse or desire; but the true truth of things, the true law of action exceeds these personal and human formations. Every standpoint, every man-made rule

of action which ignores the individual totality of the Cosmic movement, whatever its utility in external practice, is to the eye of Spiritual Truth an imperfect view and a law of the Ignorance.···In the end where the human closes and the Divine commences, where the mental disappears into the supra-mental consciousness, and the finite precipitates itself into the infinite, all evil disappears into a transcendent Divine Good, which becomes universal on every plane of consciousness that it touches".

XIII-26. Lord says :—O best of the Bharats, know that everything whether movable or immovable that is born in creation, is the outcome of the union of Kshetra and Kshetragya.

XIII-27. One who visualises the Supreme Lord, the Parameshwar uniformally lodged in all created beings as imperishable within the perishable existence, is a true Seer.

XIII-28. He who also visualises Ishwar, the Cosmic Lord uniformly existing everywhere, does not mortify his higher self by the degenerating dominance of the lower self, and thus attains Supreme Divine Status.

XIII-29 He who realises that all actions are in fact being worked out by Nature (Prakriti), and that his Atma (Self) is merely an inactive witness, (He) is the real seer of Truth.

C (3) - PERVASIVE PARAMATMA (SUPREME SELF) AND ATMA (COSMIC-SELF) ASPECTS OF THE KSHETRAGYA. (XIII—30 to 34)

As described above Kshetragya pervades this existence in three poises, (i) as a Supreme Self (Paramatma), (ii) as Cosmic Self (Vishwatma) and (iii) as individual Self (Jivatma). We have already dealt with the Jivatma aspect, and with the Ishwar and Parameshwar aspects of the Cosmic Divine. The following verses deal with the subjective Atma and Paramatma aspect of the Kshetragya.

On realisation of individual self, the Yogi begins to perceive his Self as the selves of all and all selves as part and parcel of the Cosmic Self. It is this extensive vision which is the experience of Cosmic Brahman and Cosmic Self. He then develops the next highest stage of realisation and attains Union with Paramatma, the imperishable Supreme Self (Purushottam).

XIII-30. The Lord says:—When the Yogi perceives the diversified existence of beings as rooted in the One, and spreading forth from Him, then he attains the Brahmic consciousness.

XIII-31. O Kaunteya, being beginingless and without qualities, the Imperishable Supreme Self (Paramatma) though seated in the body neither acts nor is effected by actions of the body.

Just as the Supreme Paramatma is not affected by the activity of nature, similarly the Cosmic Atma on account of its subtlety is not affected by the crude lower nature, though seated in the hearts of creatures.

XIII-32. As the all-pervading ether is not affected by reason of its subtlety, so the Cosmic Atma pervading everywhere in the body, is not affected by the nature of that body.

XIII-33. O Bharat, as the one Sun illumines the entire earth plane, so the Lord of the Kshetras (Kshetragya) illumines the entire Kshetras.

XIII-34. Those who by the vision of Divine Wisdom perceive this difference between the Kshetra and the Kshetragya, and also become aware of the knowledge of liberation from the material lower nature, attain the Supreme Divine Status.

Thus comes to an end Chapter XIII dealing with interaction of Spirit and Matter in existence, styled as "Distinction between the field (Kshetra) and the knower of the field (Kshetragya)."

CHAPTER XIV

A (1)—SUPREME KNOWLEDGE FOR TRANSFORMATION OF LOWER NATURE INTO DIVINE NATURE

(Sa-Dharma) (XIV—1 & 2)

Geeta has laid stress on development of Divine Love, and has prescribed a code of conduct in order to enable a man to secure an ascent into the Divine Nature. But since lower nature obstinately obstructs this evolutionary progress, it becomes necessary *to diagnose the root cause of this malady.* Constituent ingredients of human body (Kshetra) have been pointed out in the last chapter, in order to appreciate the sources which originate these disturbing trends of nature. If the Divine Spirit (Kshetragya) is the Central Being presiding over the Kshetra, naturally a question arises as to why this lower nature so prominently dominates life's activities of a man as to make him behave like a brute inspite of himself, quite contrary to the nature of his in-dwelling Spirit. Constitution of the Kshetra and the existence of the in-dwelling Kshetragya have been dwelt upon at length in the last chapter, but a very brief reference is made of the *psychological disturbing factors of lower nature that obstruct* our Spiritual progress. This chapter is wholly devoted to the diagnosis of these disturbing factors, in order that we may control and heal the diseased spots of our nature and to transform it into Divine Nature (Sa-Dharma).

As a result of our probe into the inner psychological impulses leading to our down-fall, we can devise ways and means to evade Nature's traps and snares, that keep us divorced from our original Divine Nature. Many sages have in the past attained Supreme Perfection with the aid of this knowledge, which is the secret knowledge of the concealed sources of the degenerating trends of Nature. This diagnosis of the diseased condition of our nature enables us to vitalise it into Spiritual Nature, and to

ultimately lift us up into the Eternal Immortal status, from where there is no possibility of return by birth in this world even after the lapse of periodical deluges of this existence.

According to Shri Aurovindo, "The distinction between the embodied soul subject to the action of Nature by its enjoyment of her gunas, qualities or modes, and the Supreme Soul who dwells enjoying the gunas but not subject, because it is itself beyond them, are the basis on which the Geeta rests its whole idea of the liberated being made one in the conscious law of its existence with the Divine. That liberation, that one-ness, that putting on of the Divine Nature (Sa-Dharma), it declares to be the very essence of Spiritual freedom, and the whole significance of immortality. Therefore says the Geeta, this is the supreme knowledge, because it leads to the highest perfection, and brings the soul to likeness with the Divine. This supreme importance assigned to Sa-Dharma is a capital point in the teaching of the Geeta."

The immortal status which an aspirant attains by practice of this knowledge is not to be understood in the ordinary sense of freedom from the law of causation and re-birth nor does it imply the sense of complete dissolution of the individual in the Spiritual being. To quote Shri Aurovindo, "Nowhere in the Geeta is there any indication that dissolution of the individual Spiritual being (Jiva) into the unmanifest indefinable or Absolute Brahman (Avyaktam Anir-deshyam), is the true meaning or condition of immortality, or the true aim of Yoga. On the contrary, it describes immoratality later on as an in-dwelling in the Ishwar in his supreme status (Mayi Nivasishyasi), a supreme perfection, a becoming of one law of being and nature with the Supreme, persistent still in existence and conscious of the universal movement but above it, as all the sages still exist (Munyah sarve), not bound to [illegible] the creation, not troubled by the dissolution of ...

Shri Aurovindo further says, "To be immortal was never held in the ancient teaching to consist merely in a personal survival of the death of the body All beings are immortal in that sense, and it is only the forms that perish The souls that do not arrive at liberation are born again in the appearance of a new cycle To be immortal in the deeper sense is something different from the survival of death. Immortality is that supreme status in which the spirit knows itself superior to death and births, infinite, imperishable, immutably eternal—immortal because never being born it never dies. Purushottam who is the Supreme Lord possesses for ever this immortal eternity He is here the inhabitant of all bodies Liberation, immortality, is to live in this unchangeably conscious eternal being of the Purushottam "

Knowledge of the secret working of the qualities of nature (Gunas) in the constitution of an embodied being leads to this Supreme attainment of Divine nature (Sa-Dharma) for conduct of his life as Jivan-Mukta

XIV-1. The Lord says :—I will further declare to you the Supreme Knowledge, the Master Knowledge, which having been known, all the sages have gone hence to the highest perfection

XIV-2. Those who have taken refuge in this knowledge *and have become one with My nature* and law of action, they are not born in the beginning of creation, not are they discomforted by the periodical deluges of manifested existence

A (2)—MAN IS INTRINSICALLY A SPIRITUAL BEING (XIV—3 & 4)

Human soul is spoken of as the son of God born out of the Divine seed germinated in the womb of Mahat-Brahman, in verses 3 and 4 of this chapter. It becomes necessary to understand what this Mahat-Brahman implies, how the Divine creates multiple beings out of His own seed. In

Chapter VII verse 5 the Lord says that it is His Spiritual Nature that becomes the Jiva. To quote Shri Aurobindo, "The Supreme Nature is the infinite timeless conscious power of the Self existent Being out of which all existences in the Cosmos are manifested, and come out of Timelessness into Time But in order to provide a Spiritual basis for this manifold universal becoming in the Cosmos, the Supreme Nature formulated itself as the Jiva To put it otherwise the eternal multiple soul of the Purushottam appears as individual spiritual existence in all forms of the Cosmos ····· Divine is at once the Father and Mother of the Universe, the substance of the infinite Idea Vigyan the Mahat-Brahman is the womb into which He casts the seeds of His self conception. As the Over-Soul He casts the seed, as the Mother the Nature-Soul, the energy filled with His conscious power, He receives it into this infinite substance of being made pregnant with His illimitable, yet self-limiting idea".

Supreme Nature of the Divine manifests as Mahat Vigyan or pervasive Divine Wisdom It is this first Divine manifestation as Mahat Vigyan or Cosmic wisdom that is described as Mahat-Brahman Cosmic Brahman exhibits Himself in the Mahat plane (Mahar Loka), as pure Divine Light, Divine Knowledge (Vigyan), Divine Energy, and Divine bliss. Entire plan of future creation variously in the lower plane, is engineered here as an ideative Blue Print. This plan is gradually wrought out by a hierarchy of gods from plane to plane resulting in the creation of multiple becomings of innumerable types, genera and species. In this Mahat-Buddhic plane, ideative seed of future creation is thus germinated by the Divine, and developed by Divine architects of nature in the lower planes.

XIV-3 The Lord says O Bharat, Mahat-Brahman is My womb into which I cast the seed resulting in the procreation of all multiple beings

XIV-4. O Kaunteya, whatever forms are produced in all

kinds of wombs, the Mahat-Brahman is their womb, and I am the Father who casts the seed

B (1)—QUALITIES OF NATURE (GUNAS) DEFILE THE JIVA (XIV—5)

An individual is undoubtedly the son of God, but he remains ignorant about his paternity. Like a truant he abandons his original paternal home, and wanders about as a vagrant in the realms of lower nature, and is caught in its whirlpool By involvement in lower nature he becomes oblivious of his nativity But due to the inherent instinct of bliss in him, inherited from his Divine Father, he recklessly runs about in search of happiness and pleasure in sense objects, and gets miserably disappointed and finds himself caught in the whirling wheel of recurring births and deaths Such is the fall of Adam and Eve from heaven, when they descended down in the lower planes of ego, mind and senses to have a taste of the forbidden fruit

Primordial energy of Brahman (Mul Prakriti) carries out the entire process of manifestation in existence This Cosmic energy is qualitative and expresses itself in three modes (i) as Sat in harmonious and buoyant mode, (ii) as Raj in kinetic mode and (iii) as Tam in con-centric materialising mode *These qualities or Gunas remain in equilibrium in* the Spiritual planes, but in the lower triple planes they become dynamic and disturb the equilibrium In the higher mental plane the harmonious movement of Sat remains predominant In the lower mental plane and desire plane, the dynamic energy of Raj gains predominance, and in the physical plane the materialising energy of Inertia gathers predominance A man lives simultaneously in all these three planes, and helplessly remains subject to the bondage of these Gunas, with one or the other dominating his activities of life Man though originally Spiritual in nature, gets bound up by the interaction of these Gunas on his body, leading to his fall from Divine consciousness

XIV-5 The Lord says :—O Mighty Arjun, it is the three Gunas —Sat, Raj and Tam born of nature that bind the imperishable dweller in the body to his personality.

B (2)—NATURE OF BONDAGES OF THE GUNAS (XIV—6 to 9)

The term Guna literally means quality, but there must be some positive entity which can have a quality The unmanifested Divine is quality-less (Nirgun), but in manifestation He assumes three qualities (i) of existence (Sat), (ii) of consciousness (Chit), and (iii) of bliss (Anand), and is designated as Sat-Chidananda. These Divine qualities later on manifest as Sato-Guna from Vishnu, Rajo Guna from Brahman and Tamo-Guna from Shiv These Gunas thus have a Divine origin, but manifest as energies of nature in the lower existence, and psychologically influence man s behaviour in life

Shri Aurovindo says that "Three modes of nature are described in the Gita only by their psychological action in man If we look for a more general definition, we shall perhaps catch a glimpse of it in the symbolical idea of Indian religion, which attributes each of these qualities respectively to one member of the Cosmic Trinity-Satwa to the preserver Vishnu, Rajas to the creator Brahman, and Tamas to the destroyer Rudra Looking behind this idea for the rationale of the triple ascription we might define the three modes or qualites in terms of the motion of the Universal Energy as Nature s three con-commitant and inseparable powers of equilibrium, kinesis and inertia. But that is only their appearance in terms of the external action of Force On the psychological side the three Gunas or qualities may be defined, Tamas as Nature's power of nescience, Rajas as her power of active seeking ignorance enlightened by desire and impulsion, and Satva as her power of possessing and harmonising knowledge."

Natural trends of these Gunas may be briefly described as follows :—

(i) *Satoguna* is characteristically a harmonious buoyant movement in nature. It reflects the Light, which is irradiated by it, itself becoming like a fluorescent substance, an apparent source of Spiritual uplift and purity. It tends to promote Divine Knowledge, but binds a man with pride of such knowledge, and with a desire for happiness. It maintains harmony, peace, order, and the Spiritual evolutionary urge.

(ii) *Rajoguna* transmits the light not reflecting it back towards the source, but ever speeding it onwards and outwards. It converts Spiritual Knowledge into worldly knowledge, and promotes attachment to sense objects, avarice, and multiple selfish desires. It binds a man with attachment to action and their results. It is a headlong forward movement of one's nature keeping him entrapped in egoistic ambitious activities.

(iii) *Tamoguna* neither reflects nor transmits, but absorbs the Light characterised by a stagnant Inertia, a headess indifference It is like a centrifugal energy integrating and materialising into 'atoms, molecules and forms. Matter is Energy and Energy integrates into matter each possessing the possibility of transformation into the other. The bondage of Tamoguna lies in its materialising tendency resulting in the promotion of inertia, laziness and ignorance of the truth.

We notice the effect of these Gunas even in physical matter. In this connection I may quote an extract from an article published by a scientific philosopher, "Matter may be defined as energy in varying intensities of vibration. Matter-forming energy is of three kinds called Sat, Raj and Tam. Sat is motion revolving in an axis. It is motion pure and simple and not the motion of a particle of matter, since

motion can exist by iteself independently of matter Sat is the first sign of matter in Nascency, and there is no matter beyond it. Raj is horizontal motion of Sat revolution Tam is a movement of the same in a circle Combination of Raj and Tam motion results in elliptical centrifugal revolutions. This concentric motion integrates and materialises the primordial energy into sub-atom, atom, molecule and tangible matter after passing it through various stages of etheric, gaseous, fiery and fluid conditions. Entire creation is of Trigunatmic origin That which exists beyond the Trigunas is the Spirit, the God. Trigunatmic world being a mere agglomeration of super-atomic revolutions possesses no touch with God All its activities though taking place in the body of God, cause no commotion therein."

Interaction of these Gunas on mental and desire bodies account for psychological varieties in human nature. Similarity and dissimilarity of gunas result in attraction and repulsion, love and hatred not only in man, but even in inanimate creation Chemical combination of elements is seen to cause churning commotion, fumes and ultimate dissolution to form a new substance. This is in short the inner sense of the dogmatic terms assigned to these Gunas We usually accept them as inexplicable principles of nature, but the modern mind does not feel satisfied with dogmas and demands some rational idea of these fundamental principles of existence Lord Krishna briefly describes the natural tendencies of these Gunas in the following verses

XIV-6 The Lord says —O sinless Arjun, out of these Gunas, born of Prakriti, Satwa is by the purity of its quality a cause of light and illumination Being stainless and pure it binds a man by attachment to knowledge and by hankerings for happiness

The man of virtue and knowledge has an ego of a virtuous man and the ego of his dialectic learning It is this Satwic ego that seeks to satisfy by being adored and

worshipped by the masses as a great holy personage with a grand show of majestic thrones and flags and veneration by feet touching. Inspite of all this paraphernalia, he may be as much foreign to Divine consciousness as his vast following

XIV 7. You should know that Raj characteristically passion-driven is generated as a result of avarice and attachment O Kaunteya, it binds the embodied spirit by attachment to egoistic actions

XIV-8 O Bharat, you should know Tamas born of Ignorance as the deluder of all embodied beings It binds by indifference, indolence and sloth

XIV-9. O Bharat, Satwa attaches a man to happiness, Rajas to action, while Tam shrouding wisdom creates an attachment for sloth and indifference

The predominance of Tamoguna results in promoting laziness, indecision, apathy, selfishness and indifference to the well-being of others It creates insensibility to blood-shed and other beastly cruelties, and moulds a man into confirmed criminal dacoit and a terrible monster

B (3)—CO EXISTENCE OF GUNAS WITH PREDOMINANCE OF ONE OVER THE OTHERS (XIV—10)

The Gunas represent three modes of one and the same Cosmic energy, and co-exist inseparably in the entire existence Since they possess conflicting tendencies, they are in a state of perpetual warfare resulting in the predominance of the strongest of them over the other two. With the increase of proportion of one Guna, the proportion of the other two diminishes, and they act as *subordinate* Gunas under the domination of the former This instability in their character makes it possible for a man to transform his nature as a progressive step in evolution by promoting Satoguna to guide his conduct This is how even the

greatest sinner has been promised an entry in the kingdom of God

XIV-10. The Lord says :—O Bharat, Satwa predominates by overpowering Raj and Tam, similarly Tam predominates by over-powering Sat and Raj, while Raj predominates by supressing Sat and Tam

B (4)—STANDARDS FOR TESTING PREDOMINANT GUNA (XIV—11 to 13)

It is of utmost importance for a man to know where he stands on the evolutionary path. Normally there are very few who ever care to trace out defects and weaknesses of their nature by introspection A man is usually over-complacent about his conduct, and believes that he is the most infallible person possessed of wisdom and worthy of being recognised as a model for being followed by others He gets upset if his failings are pointed out to him. He is ever-ready to offer gratuitous advice to others with full confidence of his competency. If one is serious about his uplift, he must give up this pride of self-sufficiency and assumed wisdom. He should be ever vigilant and make constant introspection of his nature and pick out weaknesses for eradication. Geeta points out a method which brings within easy perception red danger signals to avoid pitfalls that lie ahead in the evolutionary path. He thereby realises where he stands and which way to tread to reach his destination in safety. If he realises that he is treading Tamoguna or Rajoguna path he takes a caution to divert on the Satoguna path, and thus purifies his lower nature The Lord here declares the simplest method for detection of draw-backs in one's nature

XIV-11 The Lord says :—When flooding of light and wisdom are found streaming forth through all the sense-openings of this body, then you should know that Satoguna is gaining predominance.

XIV-12 O Best of Bharat, greed, impulsive trend for desire driven actions, impetuousity, sense attachments, originate as a result of a predominant increase of Rajoguna

XIV-13 O joy of the Purus, dark ignorance, inertia, sloth, delusion, all these originate as a result of the predominant increase of Tamoguna

B(5) -EFFECTS OF GUNAS ON MAN'S EVOLUTION (XIV—14 & 15)

Man's progress in evolution depends on the predominant Guna that he develops in his life time The Guna that guides his activities determines the destiny of his future He must, therefore, take a warning that he has to avoid Tamsic and desire driven Rajsic tendencies in the conduct of his life for further evolution in his next birth.

XIV-14. The Lord says —When a man leaves his body with the predominance of Satoguna, he goes forth to the spotless worlds of virtuous sages of Divine Wisdom

XIV 15 If he leaves his body with predominance of Rajoguna, he takes his birth in family of those who are attached to desire-driven action. If he dies with predominance of Tamoguna, he is born in the wombs of beings involved in nescience (Mudha Yonishu)

Shri Aurovindo says in "Tome one—On Yogi Book II" p 455 that "Mudha Yonishu or Adho Gachanti do not necessarily refer to animal birth The soul once having reached human consciousness cannot go back to the inferior animal consciousness any more than it can go back to a tree or an ephemeral insect. What is true is that some part of the vital energy—can and very frequently does so, if it is strongly attached to anything in the earth plane"

But this happens by way of an obsession by the desire soul of the deceased only for a temporary period to satisfy

his lust and attachment. At the end of such temporary obsession his desire body dissolves into a permanent astral atom in the usual course, and the soul passes on to the mental plane, where his mental body also gets dissolved, and his death is then complete. He then returns to the earth with another mental body, desire body and physical body among the degenerated class of people. Shri Aurovindo adds that "Asuric or Mudha Yoni cannot possibly mean animal. The Gita uses precise terms, and if it had meant animal, it would have said animal. As for the punishment it is that they go-down in their nature to more depths of Asurism or Ignorance till they touch bottom as it were"

B(6)—EFFECTS OF GUNAS ON MAN'S CONDUCT. (XIV—16 to 18)

Resultant consequence of the tendency of each Guna on man's conduct has been already dealt with in details. The Lord deals which the same point in the following verses :

XIV-16. The Lord says :—It is said that the fruit of virtuous deeds rightly done is enlightening, pure and Satvic. Pain is the consequence of Rajsic works, and Ignorance is the result of Tamsic action.

XIV-17. Knowledge is the outcome of Satwa, while greed is born of Rajas. Indifference, negligence, delusion, ignorance and attachment are the off-springs of Tam.

XIV-18. Those established in Satwa evolve upwards, those in Rajas remain in the middle, while those enveloped in Tamsic ignorance and inertia go down-wards.

C(1) THE WAY TO CROSS OVER THE BONDAGES OF GUNAS (XIV--19 & 20)

As stated above all these three Gunas including the Satoguna bind a man and operate as an impediment in his Spiritual growth. The solution does not therefore lie solely

in the development of Satoguna which no doubt helps in the development of mental peace and happiness, but the Satvic ego works as a great impediment Rajoguna and Tamoguna always lie in ambush to drag down Satoguna to their level Predominance of Satoguna *does not thus afford* a *perpetual* security against the downward pull of lower nature

Shri Aurovindo says that "Satwa is constantly entangled with and besieged by Rajas and Tamas, which may at any moment overcome it and there is a perpetual insecurity in its tenure But even if one is free from any clinging to the fruit, there may be an attachment to the work itself, the essential Rajsic bond, or for the sake of the attracting rightness of the thing done, which is the Satvic attaching cause, powerful on the virtuous man or the man of knowledge. And here evidently the resource is in that other injunction of the Gita, to give up the action itself to the Lord of works, and be only a desireless and equal-minded instrument of His Will"

Thus in order to transform one-self into the Spiritual Nature, the only recourse is to rise above the Gunas and to act with Trigunatit consciousness

XIV-19 Thus the Lord says:—When the Seer perceives that none but the Gunas is the sole cause of all actions, and turns to That which is Supreme above the Gunas, then he becomes one with My Being

XIV-20 When the soul the dweller in the body rises above the three Gunas, which constitute the cause of his embodiment, then he is freed from subjection to births and deaths and their concomitants, decay, old age and suffering, and enjoys Immortality and Supreme Bliss

C 2)—NATURE AND BEHAVIOUR OF A TRIGUNATIT (XIV—21 to 26)

Having learnt from the Lord that Divine approach is possible to a man only when he has crossed over the bond-

ages of Gunas, Arjun becomes anxious to know the qualities that such a man has to develop for his behaviour in life, and also the way to surmount the effects of the Gunas. He therefore implores the Lord as follows :

XIV-21 Arjun says :—O Lord, what qualities are developed by the man who has risen above the three Gunas How does he act and behave in life, and how does he surmount these Gunas ?

So long as a man lives in this world, he is bound to be influenced by the Gunas even though possessed of the enlightenment of Satoguna As stated above, even Satvic nature becomes a source of bondage The question that arises in the mind of an aspirant is whether his success lies in abhoring the Gunas and to violently fight them out for eradication by ascetic disciplines Geeta does not advocate this arduous method, but suggests a smooth way of indifference and non-attachment to the experiences of the Gunas whether pleasant or unpleasant, in addition to devotion and surrender to the Divine The result of such indifference to Gunas reflects in man's behaviour as pointed out in the following verses :

XIV-22 The Lord says : O Pandava, he who does not abhor or shrink from the infusion of enlightenment arising out of his growing Satwa, or from the growth of impulse for action due to his rising Rajas, or from the growth of delusion and ignorance resulting from his growing Tamas , and he who does not long for them on liberation,

XIV-23. he who seated as an indifferent neutral is not perturbed by the effects of Gunas , he who believing that action is nothing but the interaction of Gunas stands apart from them unmoved .

XIV-24 he who is established in his Self, is balanced in pleasure and pain, to whom earth, stone or gold or alike ; and who is steadfast and indifferent to pleasant or unpleasant, to praise or censure

XIV-25 he who is unperturbed in honour or dishonour, has no distinction between friend or foe, and who has renounced all personal initiatives for action to the Divine,—such a man is said to be a Gunatit or to have crossed over the Gunas.

XIV 26 He who strived for union with Me with unadulterated love and devotion, safely crosses over the Gunas, and becomes fit to become one with Brahmic Consciousness

C(3)—COSMIC BRAHMAN IS FOUNDED ON SUPREME PURUSHOTTAM (XIV—27)

Trigunatit status is one of peace and silence of the Brahman constantly maintained even while one is living and acting in the Trigunatmic sphere One who attains this status watches the effects of Gunas unmoved like a witness, and is not perturbed by them. He becomes an equal-visioned Universal Being Realisation of such Brahmic Status by a Trigunatit is not however the final goal There is a still higher Divine status of Purushottam, which is the foundation and source of this Brahman existence That Supreme Status is also the source of imperishable immortal Bliss and of the Eternal Law of Cosmic activity Shri Aurovindo says that "There is a status which is greater than the peace of the Akshar, as it watches unmoved the strife of the Gunas There is a highest spiritual experience and foundation above the immutability of the Brahman, there is eternal Dharma greater than the Rajsic impulsion to works (Pravritti) there is an absolute delight which is untouched by Rajasic suffering and beyond the Satvic happiness, and these things are found and possessed by dwelling in the being and power of the Purushottam But it is acquired by Bhakti Its status must be that Divine delight (Anand), in which is experienced the union of utter love and possessing one-ness the crown of Bhakti And to rise

into that Anand, *into that inexpressible one-ness must be* the completion of spiritual perfection and the fulfilment of the eternal immortalising Dharma "

XIV-27. The Lord thus says :—I am the foundation of the Brahman and also of *imperishable and immortal Spiritual* experience, of eternal Divine Law of action (Dharma), and of exclusive bliss and happiness.

Description of this Supreme Status of Purushottam forms the subject of the discourse in the next Chapter.

Thus ends Chapter XIV styled as 'The Yoga by separation and distinction of the Gunas."

CHAPTER XV

A (1)—PURUSHOTTAM IS THE FOUNDATION OF COSMIC BRAHMAN. (XV—1 & 2)

The Supreme Divine is spoken of in the last chapter as the foundation of the manifested Brahman. He is not only the root cause of Brahman existence, but is also the efficient cause of all the creative energies that manifest the Many aspect of the Divine The entire existence is solely His expression in multiple ways, and *it is He who vicariously* evolves it out through His Root-energy (Mul-Prakriti). This existence is symbolically spoken of as a Tree, having its roots upwards in the Supreme Imperishable Purushottam, and its trunk, branches and leaves extending downwards infinitely in all its seven planes. Knowledge of the underlying Truth of this tree is the subject of *inner realisation*, and not of intellectual scrutiny. It is the ineffable Veda beyond description in words. An idea of it is however vaguely attempted to be expressed in the verses of the well-known four Vedas But these verses reflect only an exterior crust of that unfathomable and *inexpressible* Divine Knowledge. They (Chandansi) are therefore said to represent leaves of the tree which form only its external appearance. One who has realised this esoteric Divine Knowledge (Veda) is the true knower of the Vedas.

This Tree is described as "Ashwatham" derived from "A shwa-stha" meaning not standing till tomorrow, because of the ever-fleeting *nature of this existence*. It is translated as a as Pipal tree or a Banian tree. Banian tree fits in better because of its tendency to shoot off numerous roots from its branches downwards, which in course of time become multiple roots of the tree itself even though the original root has been disintegrated and disappeared. It is an everlasting Tree (Avyaya) ever renewing its roots and ever flourishing in full bloom. Nourished by the three

Gunas its branches spread out upwards and downwards Its sprouts peculiarly sticky are ensnaring objects of the senses, and its roots shoot out *downwards and entwine a* man in the meshes of ever-tightening bondages of action

XV-1 The Lord says .—The *Ashwatha Tree having its* root upwards into Supreme Divine, and extending its branches downwards (in the Cosmic planes) is spoken of as an Imperishable Tree *Hymns of the Vedas* represent its leaves One who has the inner insight of this Tree is the real knower of the Vedas

XV-2 Its infinitely extended branches are nourished by the sap of Gunas , its sprouts are the sense attractions, and its *offshoots extend downwards all over in the world* of men

A(2)—TRANSITORY NATURE OF THE WORLD TREE AND THE WAY OF DISENTANGLEMENT (XV—3 to 5)

This World Tree *rooted in the Supreme has to all outer* appearances assumed a monstrous form due to Ignorance Its enchanting sprouts and buds of sense objects attract a *man to vicious actions, and thereby entrap him in* the network of bondages These snares of senses are in fact his own creations in *Ignorance of the Truth* A *man* possessed of Divine Wisdom working behind this Tree never falls in the trap of senses, and his actions do not bind him. *He* does not in any *way feel unnerved by this monstrous form* of the World Tree as a man in Ignorance does This Tree though experienced as very strongly rooted by a person in *Ignorance, can be cut asunder by the weapon of* non-attachment by the wise

Shri Krishna Prem in his Gita says, 'Non-attachment means a great deal more than mere *austere will of ascetic* refusal of commerce with the world Infact by strengthening his personal will, it may even rivet the man more tightly

to the bonds of Inaction if not of Action Non-attachment can never be attained while standing on one's personality, nor while standing in the individual ego. The disciple must see his personality as something separate from himself, and must take refuge in the Impersonal Light Then alone will non-attachment flower in his heart ...Other teachers too declare that man must come from self into the Self, from death to Life, from darkness to Light Established in this Light, cohesive power will leave the Cosmic Tree, and it will fall to pieces, like those fabled ships which on approaching the magnetic mountains lost all their nails and sank into the sea. Buddha says that not by travelling is the world's end reached"

Having cut asunder this entraping World Tree by practice of non-attachment, the wise should proceed on that Divine Path, which leads to a status from where there is no return to this mortal world He should at the same time surrender himself to that Primal God-head, the Purushottam from whom originated this dynamic existence in the hoary past. He should renounce all worldly attachments, sense clingings, all desires and the dualities of pleasure and pain etc Having realised his Self-consciousness, the disillusioned and the wise attains the imperishable Divine Status of Purushottam

XV-3. The Lord says.—The form of this World Tree is not really such as we experience it here Though without beginning or end this Ashwatha Tree has neither firm roots, nor is it strongly established on a solid foundation Having cut asunder this ostensible strongly rooted Tree by the weapon of non-attachment,

XV-4 one should proceed on that Divine Path, on attaining the end of which he never returns to mortal life He should contemplate on that Supreme Goal saying, "I worship that Primal Purush from whom had streamed forth this dynamic world existence in the hoary past"

XV-5 The divine seeker liberating himself from pride and delusion subduing sense-clingings, remaining constantly absorbed in Self-consciousness, and absolving from the snares of desires and dualities like pleasure or pain, such a disillusioned seeker attains That Imperishable Divine Status.

A(3)—PURUSHOTTAM, THE SUPREME ABODE (XV—6)

This Supreme Purushottam constitutes the subjective Divine Aspect as Purush and also objective aspect of Cosmic energies. He is the Divine Light, Divine consciousness, Divine energy and Divine wisdom which in manifestation are radiated in the Cosmic existence, and assume the forms of multifarious energies working out the created existence. It is the Divine energy and Light that exhibit as the light of fire, and as the resplendent light of the sun and moon which illumine this world. Kath Upnishad states that the Cosmic Brahman is the eternal "Ashwatha", whose roots are aloft and whose branches project downwards. It is He that is called the Bright One, the Brahman and Immortality, and in Him are established all the worlds. For fear of Him the fire burneth, the Sun giveth light, and the gods Indra, Vayu and Death hasten in their course. If in this world of men you are able to apprehend Him before your body falls, then you become fit for liberation from births and deaths

XV-6 The Lord says :—Neither the Sun, nor the Moon, nor Fire can illumine that Supreme Brahman. One who attains Him never returns to birth. That Status is My Supreme abode.

B (1)—PURUSHOTTAM MANIFESTS AS JIVATMA (XV—7 to 9)

Lord Krishna points out His original abode in the Supreme Supra-cosmic Purushottam. He has so long been

describing Himself as the 'Cosmic I", because He was addressing Arjun as Narayan from His Cosmic Brahman Status He has been hinting about His Supreme abode as "Param Dham" or "Tat-Dham" in previous chapters In this chapter, He reveals the entire mystery and points out in verse 19 that He is the Purshottam who is pervading this multiple existence subjectively as Jiva, and objectively as Cosmic energies of Sun, Moon, Fire and many others. It is He who manifests as the productive potentiality of the earth as mental energies of intellect, memory and delusion, and also as Divine Wisdom (Vigyan) the true Veda. The Lord says that He is pervading subjectively in all creatures as an eternal portion of the Supreme Divine as Jivatma. The Jivatma in men develops inner organs of ego, mind, intellect besides five Knowledge-senses to experience the play of this multiple creation. He indifferently enjoys the play of Trigunas through these sense organs. When a man dies, his self departs with all sense organs of mind and body, and brings them back on taking rebirth in another body

Jivatma is described as an eternal portion of the Divine, and thus retains its entity eternally even after the highest realisation The individual soul is the inherent 'Many" aspect of the Cosmic Divine. The 'One' and "Many" are His two *inseparable facets.* God is, *therefore*, described as the "One" that is "Many" Jivatma thus retains all Divine potentialities and is virtually a representative of the Cosmic Ishwar in human body. That is why Jiva is spoken of as Ishwar lording over the human body in verse 8.

To quote Shri Aurovindo, "The individual Spirit exists and ever existed beyond in the Eternal, for it is itself everlasting (Sanatan). It is evidently this idea of the eternal individual, which leads the Geeta to avoid any expression at all suggestive of a complete dissolution (Laya). It rather speaks of the highest state of the soul as a dwelling in the Purushottam (Nivasishayasi Maiyeva) This *eternal indi-*

vidual is no other than or in any way really separate from the Divine Purush. It is the Lord Himself, the Ishwar who by virtue of the eternal multiplicity of His "One-ness" exists for ever as the immortal soul within us But the identity of the Lord and the soul in mutable Nature is hidden from us by the outer appearance, and lost in the crowding mobile deceptions of that Nature"

Jivatma is said to be a portion of the Divine It is not the quantitative portion but the qualitative portion, that is referred to here Jivatma being a microcosmic Divine is replete with all, Divine potentialities which make it possible for a man to evolve into Divine consciousness and Bliss

XV-7. The Lord says . —It is an eternal portion of Myself that becomes the Jiva in the world of living creatures This Jiva attracts round himself subjective powers of mind and five knowledge-senses veiled in Nature

XV-8 When the Jiva presiding over the body as Ishwar assumes another body after leaving the former body, seizes and carries these six senses with him, like the wind carrying fragrance from flower beds.

XV-9. Enshrined in ears, eyes, touch, taste, smell and mind, he (Jiva) enjoys objects of senses.

B(2)—POSSIBILITY OF SELF-REALISATION (ATMA-DARSHAN) ONLY BY THE EYE OF KNOWLEDGE (XV—10 & 11)

It is now clear beyond doubt that the Jivatma, an eternal portion of the Divine, positively exists in human body It objectively assumes a form at birth, and departs from it at death. He gets involved in Gunas, and enjoys sense-objects through mind and senses. Still he remains beyond perception to an ordinary man for lack of the eye of Wisdom. Only those who develop this eye by control of senses and mind, can perceive his immediate presence [illegible] in

their hearts But those who have not transformed their lower nature into higher nature are unable to perceive him inspite of best attempts. Physical attempts to visualise the Self by dissection of the physical body prove of no avail. It is only the psychological conversion of the entire lower nature into Spiritual Nature that makes self-realisation a practical possibility

To quote Shri Aurovindo, "A man to know himself must be Kritatman, formed and complete in the Spiritual mould, enlightened in the Spiritual Vision. The Yogins who have this eye of Knowledge see the Divine Being we are, in their own endless reality, their own eternity of Spirit They are delivered from the crude material limitation, from the form of mental personality, from the transient life formulations, they dwell immortal in the truth of the Self and Spirit But they see Him too not only in themselves but in all Cosmos"

XV-10. The Lord says :—The deluded do not perceive him (the Self) even when the self objectively enters a body, or departs from it or while enjoying sense objects by getting involved in Gunas. Only those who have developed the Vision of Knowledge can perceive him

XV-11 The Yogis striving after perfection visualise the Self as seated in their own selves But those nonstriving ignorant persons cannot visualise him inspite of best efforts

B(3)—MANIFESTATION OF THE SUPREME AS COSMIC OBJECTIVE ENERGIES *(XV—12 to 14)*

The Supreme manifests not only subjectively as Jivas in this multiple existence, but also objectively as Cosmic energies of light and heat of the Sun, fire and even as productive fluid in the earth, and digestive power in the human and other living creatures He appears as Cosmic

vital energies of five Pranas which by their harmonised action sustain and assimilate four kinds of nutritious food to nourish the growth of created beings. Four kinds of food products mentioned in verse 14 are (i) 'those which are chewed, (ii) which are sucked, (iii) which are licked, and (iv) which are drunk.

XV-12. The Lord says :—The resplendent light immanent in the Sun which illumines the entire world, and the light of the Moon and fire, know it as having emanated from Me.

XV-13. Permeating the earth, I sustain all creatures by My vital energy and becoming delicious vitalising fluid (Som-Ras), I nourish plant and vegetable kingdom.

XV-14. Becoming Cosmic fire of life as Pranas, I sustain the bodies of living creatures, and by harmonious combination of Pran and Apan (ingoing and outgoing breaths), promote assimilation of four kinds of food in the digestive system.

B(4)—MANIFESTATION OF THE SUPREME AS MENTAL AND SUPRA-MENTAL ENERGIES (XV—15)

The Supreme as the Cosmic Purush manifests as Mahat-Buddhi (Divine Wisdom) not only in the Cosmos but also in the multiple individuals (Jivas). A man is not generally aware of this Vigyan consciousness on account of his constant involution in lower nature, but he can realise that consciousness on liberation from the lower nature. This Divine wisdom later on manifests as mental energies of intellect, memory, reasoning and discrimination etc. It is thus the Divine lodged in the hearts of creatures, who manifests as these mental energies, as well as the Divine Wisdom.

XV-15. The Lord says : – I am lodged in the hearts of all creatures. Memory, Divine Wisdom, reasoning and discrimination emanate from Me. It is I who has to be

realised through the Vedas (Divine Wisdom). I am the Creator of the Vedas (Vedan-Krit), and true possessor of their Knowledge (Veda-vit).

C(1)—TWO SPIRITUAL POISES OF THE SUPREME (XV—16)

The Supreme Divine is said to be the root cause of multiple creation and of all Cosmic energies. He is also the Jivatma in individual beings through whom He indifferently enjoys the Trigunatmic play of existence. This Dynamic World tree is the manifestation of the Static Akshar Brahman. Both these Kshar and Akshar aspects of Brahman are manifestations of the Supreme Purushottam. It has been repeatedly stressed that the entire existence is nothing but the Divine pervasion, which appears as the soul of matter, soul of life and soul of mind. But by practical experience a man finds all these levels of consciousness almost undivine in their functionings. This undeniable obvious fact may justify one to arrive at a conclusion that the lower existence of Dynamic nature is devoid of all Divinity, and that it is nothing but a non-existent illusion worthy of being totally discarded and abandoned. The only truth that would then be considered worthy of realisation would be the Immutable silence of the Akshar or some non-existent void (Shunya) The world as we experience it has then to be accepted as a hypnotic delusion of diseased mind, and must be discarded if one really aims at Divine realisation in pursuance of the well-known precept "Brahman Satyam, Jagat Mithya."

The Geeta emphatically affirms that the Dynamic Brahman existence "Kshar" is as much Divine as the Immutable Akshar existence. They are not separate disconnected entities, but are integrally the same though in different poises. Both these poises have to be realised for integral Divine realisation.

To quote Shri Aurovindo, "These two are the true spirits we see in the world. One energises in front in its action, the other remains behind it steadfast in that perpetual silence from which the action comes, and in which all actions cease and disappear into timeless being (Nirvan). The difficulty which baffles our intelligence is that these two seem to be irreconcilable opposites, with no real nexus between them or any transition from the one to the other except by an intolerant movement of separation. ...When we live in the mobility of the becoming, we may be aware of it, but hardly live in the Immortality of timeless self existence And when we fix ourselves in timeless Being, time and space and circumstance fall away from us, and begin to appear as a troubled dream in the Infinite. The most persuasive conclusion would be at first sight, that the mobility of the spirit in Nature is an illusion, a thing real only when we live in it, but not real in essence, and that is why when we go back into self, it falls away from our incorruptible essence. That is the familiar cutting of the knot of the riddle (Brahman Satyam, Jagat Mithya)."

"The Gita does not take refuge in this explanation which has enormous difficulties of its own, besides its failure to account for the illusion, for it only says that it is all a mysterious and incomprehensible Maya. Then we might just as well say that it is all a mysterious incomprehensible double reality, spirit concealing itself from spirit. The Gita speaks of Maya, but only as a bewildering partial consciousness which loses hold of the complete Reality, lives in the phenomenon of mobile nature, and has no sight of the spirit of which she is the active power. When we transcend this Maya, the world does not disappear, it only changes its whole heart of meaning. In the spiritual vision we find not that all this does not really exist, but rather that all is, but with a sense quite other than its present mistaken significance. All is Self and Soul and Nature of the Godhead, all is Vasudeva. The world for the Gita is real, a creation of the Lord, a power of the Eternal, a manifestation

from the Par-Brahman, and even this lower nature of the triple Maya is a derivation from the Supreme Divine Nature. Nor can we take refuge altogether in this distinction that there is a double, and inferior active and temporal and a superior calm, still, and eternal reality beyond action ; and that our liberation is to pass from this partiality to that greatness, from the action to the silence. For the Gita insists that we can and should while we live, be conscious in the self and its silence, and yet act with power in the world of nature. It gives the example of the Divine Himself, who is not bound by necessity of birth, but free and superior to the Cosmos and yet abides eternally in action. Therefore, it is by putting on a likeness of the Divine Nature in its completeness, that the unity of this double experience becomes entirely possible".

Both these poises of the Divine are thus real, and realisable without withdrawal from the world and its actions. Geeta lays special stress on the reality of both Kshar and Akshar aspects of the Divine. It says that there are two Cosmic Purushas, one the Kshar and the other the Akshar. The Kshar Purush presides over the soul of all created beings, while the Akshar Purush is the Immutable secret source of the entire mutability of the multiple Kshar existence Both these aspects of the Brahman are inseparable two phases of the Cosmic Divine. They reside pervasively in all human beings as higher self and lower self. They are spoken of in the Upnishads as two birds, perched on the world tree. The one indulges in eating its sweet fruits and thereby remains subject to births and deaths, while the other remains seated indifferently on the top as an immutable witness watching, sanctioning, sustaining and lording over the transitory activities of that tree.

XV-16. The Lord thus says :—There are two Purushas (Spiritual Beings) in this world, the Kshar (Mutable Personal) and the Akshar (Immutable impersonal). The

Kshar constitutes all these existences of multiple creations, while the Akshar is the deeply-rooted secret source of the Kshar.

C(2)—PURUSHOTTAM, THE SOURCE OF THE MANIFESTED KSHAR AND AKSHAR PURUSHAS

(XV—17 & 18)

The Kshar existence is dynamic and ever changing, while the Akshar is static and unchangeable. If both of them co-exist in the Cosmic existence, what is that power which makes it possible to bridge the wide gulf between these two opposite conditions. In the absence of any such medium to connect the two, it would be impossible for a man to attain the peace and calm of Akshar. The only way to attain that higher Divine realisation will then be to discard the world as a positive obstacle. The theory of Illusion (Maya) of the world existence will then be fully justified.

Geeta solves this riddle by asserting that Kshar and Akshar existences are two manifested poises of the Supreme Purushottam in manifestation. It is the Purushottam who directly pervades the dynamic worlds of mind, life and matter, sustains their activities, and at the same time pervades the Immutable Akshar existence. The Supreme Par-Brahman though immanent in the Kshar Brahman as well as in Akshar Brahman, exceeds far above the Kshar, and is greater and higher than even the Akshar.

To quote Shri Aurovindo, "Akshar is Supreme in relation to the elements and action of Cosmic Nature. It is the Immutable self of all, and the Immutable self of all is the Purushottam. The Akshar is He in the freedom of His Self-existence unaffected by the action of His powers in Nature, not impinged on by the urge of his own becoming, undisturbed by the play of his own qualities. The Purushottam is at the same time greater than the Akshar, because He is more than this immutability, and He is not

limited even by the highest eternal status of his being. Still it is through whatever is immutable and eternal in us that we arrive at that highest status from which there is no returning to birth. But when pursued through the Akshar alone, this attempt at liberation becomes the seeking of the Indefinable, a thing hard for our nature embodied as we are here in Matter. But yet is He more even than a highest unmanifest Akshar, more than any negative Absolute Neti Neti, because He is to be known also as the Supreme Purush, who extends this whole Universe in His own existence. He is a Supreme mysterious All, and ineffable positive Absolute of all things here. He is the Lord in the Kshar, Purushottam not only there but here in the heart of every creature (Ishwar). And there too even in His highest eternal status (Para Avyakta), He is the Supreme Lord Parameshwar, no aloof and unrelated indefinable, but the origin and father and mother and first foundation and eternal abode of self and Cosmos, and Master of all existences, and enjoyer of askesis and sacrifice. It is by knowing Him at once in the Akshar and the Kshar, it is by knowing Him as the Unborn who partially manifests Himself in all birth, and even Himself descends as the constant Avtar. It is by knowing Him in His entirety (Samagram Mam), that the soul is easily released from the appearances of lower nature, and returns by a vast sudden growth and broad immeasurable ascension, into the Divine being and Supreme Nature. For, the truth of the Kshar too is a truth of the Purushottam. The Purushottam is in the hearts of every creature, and is manifested in His countless Vibhutis, Purushottam is the Cosmic Spirit in Time. He is both Akshar and Kshar, and yet He is other, because He is more and greater than either of these opposites"

XV-17. Thus the Lord says : —But other than these two is the Supreme Purush called the Supreme Self, who permeates the triple worlds, and upholds them as the Imperishable Lord.

XV-18. Since I am far beyond the Kshar and superior to Akshar, I am proclaimed as Purushottam in the world and in the Vedas.

C(3)—LORD KRISHNA AS AVTAR OF PURUSHOTTAM (XV—19 & 20)

Lord Krishna in human form was first treated by Arjun as a human friend, guide and relation. When he saw His Cosmic Form, he realised Him as the Cosmic Divine. It was hinted by Him from time to time that His Supreme Abode was other than the Kshar or Akshar status, from which He was addressing Arjun as an Avtar. He now positively reveals His true stature saying that He is the Supreme Purushottam descended down on earth as His Avtar. It is beyond the mental capacity of man to integrally visualise or to have any conception of the Cosmic Divine, much less of the Supra-Cosmic Purushottam. It is, therefore, a part of the Divine plan by which the Supreme Divine descends down from the Cosmic stature into human form as an Avtar to enable a man to realise the Divinity within Himself and to unite and come in close association with Him by intense devotion and surrender. He thus transforms himself into the likeness of the Divine Spiritually and dynamically through the aid of the Avtar.

By realising Lord Krishna as the Avtar of the Supreme Divine His devotee develops true Bhakti, true Knowledge, and becomes a true Divine Worker. He experiences no wide gulf between the dynamic Kshar and the static Akshar because of his realisation of the Supreme Purushottam, who is both Kshar and Akshar. The Mayavadins experience this insurmountable difficulty, and totally discard the Dynamic aspect of the Divine as an illusion or Maya. By intense devotion and surrender to Lord Krishna, the devotee attains the highest salvation and complete Union with the Supreme. He attains (i) Union in Spiritual essence and identity with the Divine (Sayujya), (ii) Union by the

indwelling of his soul in the Divine presence in the Divine plane (Samipya and Salokya), and (iii) Dynamic Union into the likeness and oneness of his nature with the Divine Nature (Sadharma). The combined completeness of these three liberated conditions founded here on the Spiritual, Unity in the midst of diversity is the culmination of the integral Yoga of Geeta

The ultimate salvation of the illusionists Gyanis materially differs from this integral salvation He completely discards the dynamic aspect of the Divine treating it as a mental hypnotic illusion, and fails to realise the Divinity in the dynamic existence His final goal is some joyless static Nirvan in the Nirgun *Divine*, *which is* only a partial realisation Isha Upnishad says that "Into a blind darkness they enter who follow after the Ignorance, they as if into a greater darkness enter who devote themselves to the Knowledge alone Other verily is that which comes by the Knowledge, and other that which comes by the Ignorance He who knows That as both in One, the Knowledge and the Ignorance, by the Ignorance crosses beyond death, and by the Knowledge enjoys Immortality ' Thus the realisation of both dynamic or Avidya aspect and of the static (Vidya) aspect of the manifested Divine, is indispensable for total realisation of the Divine

Shri Aurovindo says, 'Divine in the equality of His imperturbable Self existence, is one in It with all objects and creatures, He brings that boundless equality, that deep oneness down into His devotee's mind and heart, life and body, and founds on it in an indivisible integrality the trinity of Divine Love, Divine Works, and Divine Knowledge This is the Gita's way of salvation ' This sacred teaching is spoken of by the Lord as the most secret Shastra, an unimpeachable sacred authority which has to be practised for transformation of our nature and our self into Divine Nature and Divine Self

XV-19. The Lord says :—O Bharat, he who is not deluded by Ignorance, and knows Me as Purushottam, he equipped with Divine Knowledge worship Me with his whole being.

XV-20. O sinless one, this most secret Shastra has thus been disclosed by Me to you. By thorough grasp and practice of this Knowledge, a man becomes possessed of Divine Wisdom and attains the culmination of his endeavour for My realisation.

Thus comes to an end Chapter XV styled as "Union with the Purushottam."

CHAPTER XVI

A(1)—SPIRITUAL (DAIVI) AND DEMONIAC (ASURIC) NATURE AND THEIR ORIGIN

It has been pointed out in the previous chapter that the Supreme Spirit pervades the entire existence, and that the individual self is spiritually one in essence with the same But for all practical purposes, expression of our Spiritual Nature remains clouded by lower nature, which entirely dominates our conduct in life Why this lower nature clouds free expression of the Spirit in man's conduct is the greatest mystery The Divine Spirit pervades this existence in His "Many" aspect as Jivatma in individual creatures but it is the Universal Nature that controls and dynamises the entire activity of this existence. There are two types or movements of the Cosmic Nature, technically known as Pravritti or involution and Nivritti or evolution The former is the great outgoing breath of the Brahman by which the Universe comes forth into being, the latter is the inflowing counterpart by which all things return towards their source, the Brahman. The Universal Nature has thus two tendencies involutary and evolutionary Evolutionary nature is known as Daivi or Spiritual Nature, while involutary nature is called Asuric or undivine nature. They are both mechanisms of Cosmic Nature, and have their own utility in bringing about manifestation of the Cosmic existence

Spirit by itself could not create the world without the aid of this Cosmic Nature Brahma created four Kumaras, the pure child souls, and directed them to undertake the work of creation. They being pure spirits by nature refused to obey this order and marched towards the Divine There upon Brahma not only got enraged, but even cursed them. It was the period when Spiritual evolution was out of place, and the inauguration of the Involutary nature was an

essential necessity for furthering the process of creation That was the reason why the attitude of Kumaras though highly praiseworthy in the present age, was then condemned by Brahma Himself. The virtues of one period thus become vices of the other.

Involutary principles of Cosmic Nature had to be encouraged, and they developed mental elementals in the mental plane, desire elementals in the astral plane and material elements in the physical plane, which gradually enveloped the Spirit in mental, astral and physical sheaths Thus the Spirit got itself involved ultimately in the inconscient mineral mould. This was the period of the downward cycle, when involutary nature proved its great utility in carrying out the Divine plan of manifestation, and it naturally had its own predominance over the evolutionary Spiritual Nature This accounts for the victories of Asuras and Demons over the Devas from time to time in deadly warfare between the two referred to in the Puranas. The Spiritual Nature of Truth found itself completely eclipsed and there came about the mythological immolation of Sati (Truth Nature) in the yagna of Daksha Prajapati, the ingenious creator of multiple existence.

After the work of involution was completed by the involution of the Spirit in inconscient mineral, there emerged an upward cycle of the liberating urge of the involved Spirit from the depth of the matter itself in the form of Parvati (Daughter of mountain), who undertook the work of evolving that imprisoned Spirit to its original Divine Status The evolutionary process of Cosmic Nature having thus commenced, the inconscient mineral began to evolve as semi conscient plant kingdom, and later on as the sentient life kingdom of insects, worms and animals. All this process of evolution up to the animal stage was carried out by the sole working of the Cosmic evolutionary process, without any individual effort on the part of the trees or animals They had not developed ego sense, and [illegible]

fully individualised. With the growth of ego, the Spirit involved in, higher animals began to individualise, and there came in existence the world of individualised humanity. The primitive man was a savage, a cave man and by nature a Rakshas and a brute in human form, because he was still *dominated by his ancestral animal nature.*

The slow evolutionary force of Cosmic Nature could now be speeded up and accellerated by him by additional individual effort of his own aided by the growth of intellectual and mental illumination. But as an article lying embedded in the depths of earth for an infinitely long period, when unearthed retains a deep coloured coating which takes it long to erase, similarly man who has emerged out of the depths of animal nature, still persists in retaining his past hereditary brute instincts, and is controlled by what we call Asuric nature. Bitter experiences resulting from this brute nature contribute to the growth of man into *higher levels of mind, intellect and discrimination.* But nature of man is controlled by his sub-conscious mind, which is the store house of his own ancestral brute instincts. Its intensity is being gradually modified from birth to birth, by the moral, social and state laws enforced upon the conduct of his life. Unless these moral principles emerge from the heart, these past instincts remain artificially *supressed, and a man moves about posing himself as a* civilised social being. But in moments of crisis his supressed sub-conscious nature reveals itself in stark nakedness, and the dark Asur who was lying in ambush within him, awaiting for an opportunity to raise its head, comes into forefront. Geeta, therefore, advises us to substitute this Asuric heritage by the natural heritage of our inner Divine self, for further evolution. As the saying goes, a man reaps what he sows. Our Asuric nature tends to keep us entrapped in the meshes of multiple desires, anger, greed, aggrandisements, pride and various other vicious activities, which give a strong impetus to our brute nature. It is only when we develop Spiritual Nature that we begin to ascend the ladder of

evolution and gradually become conscious in the higher levels of mind. super-mind, and even of the Divinity abiding secretly in our heart.

A(2)—HERITAGES OF DAIVI (SPIRITUAL) NATURE AND ASURIC NATURE (XVI—1 to 5)

Inherent nature of Jiva is Spiritual, but in the process of involution this self gets eclipsed by mental, astral and physical bodies, whose nature completely dominates the upsurge of Spiritual Nature, and controls man's activities of life with a strong hand. Spiritual Nature is our own Divine heritage, while the Asuric Nature is the heritage of our past lives. A man is himself responsible for moulding his inborn nature (Swa-bhao) from birth to birth under the law of Karma. Every man has in his sub-conscious mind a store of seeds of good or bad deeds of his past life. If the balance of his virtuous deeds tilts down his past evil deeds, he is born with a comparatively happy and smooth life and his natural trend is usually Satvic, God-fearing and virtuous. . But if the heritage of his past birth consists of evil and cruel deeds, he is helplessly driven in his next birth to lead a miserable life, and to act with a beastly nature in human form.

The Lord now describes the natural tendencies of one who is born with Daivi heritage.

XVI-1 to 3. The Lord says :—O Bharat, the following qualities are the natural endowments of the nature of one who is born with Daivi heritage :

(i) Fearlessness,
(ii) Purity of physical body, astral body and mental body,
(iii) Steadfastness in Divine wisdom,
(iv) Self-giving by body, mind and wealth,
(v) Control of mind, body and senses,
(vi) Self sacrifice,

(vii) Study of scriptures,

(viii) Askesis, candour, straightforwardness, harmlessness, truth, absence of wrath, self denial, calm, absence of fault-finding, compassion to all beings, absence of greed, gentleness, modesty, unpretentiousness, impressive personality, forgiveness, patience, cleanliness, absence of envy and pride—These are the heritages of the man born into the Daivi Nature

XVI-4. Hypocrisy, arrogance, self esteem or conceit, pride, wrath, fool hardiness and ignorance, are the natural tendencies of one who is born with Asuric heritage.

XVI-5. Daivic heritage is considered to lead towards liberation, and the Asuric heritage towards bondage. O Pandava, you have no reason to grieve for you are born with Daivi heritage

B (1)— PROPENSITIES OF ASURIC NATURE

(XVI—6 *to* 18)

Broadly speaking mankind is divided into two categories of nature, one virtuous and the other demonic. It must not however be understood to mean that there are two distinct kinds of human beings, one of purely Daivic Nature, and the other exclusively of Asuric Nature. A normal man is ordinarily a mixture of both, but one or the other tendency is more pronounced, which makes him prominently Rajo tamsic, or Sato-rajsic. A description of the nature given in subsquent verses relates to the propensities of a Rajo-tamsic man

XVI 6 The Lord says —Twofold is the division of created beings in this world, namely Daivi and Asuric Daivic nature has been de cribed in details Now O Parth, hear from Me details of Asuric nature

XVI-7. Men of Asuric nature have no idea of their self-involution or evolution. They are possessed neither of purity nor of straight dealing nor of truthfulness

XVI-8. They declare that the world has no basic truth and no Divine power to control or regulate its activities; that it is brought into being by accidental combinations of matter. What can be its utility except to enjoy it to the brim in satisfaction of multiple desires.

XVI-9. Holding such a view about the existence, these degenerated souls of limited knowledge, perpetrators of ferocious deeds, are born as adversaries of mankind only for destruction of the world.

XVI-10. Resorting to insatiable desires, possessed of vanity, conceit, and arrogance, holding fast to false delusive concepts, they engage themselves vigorously in pursuit of impure resolves.

XVI-11. Engrossed in endless worry till the end of their lives, holding that enjoyment and satisfaction of desires is definitely the supreme goal of life,

XVI-12. held in bondage by hundred ties of expectations, given over to lust and anger, they strive to obtain hoards of wealth for sensual enjoyments by unlawful means.

XVI-13. They boast—This much has been aggrandised by me to-day, that desired ambition I shall fulfil tomorrow. This much wealth is already mine and that much can also be mine in future.

XVI-14. I have slain this enemy and I shall slay the others also. I am the Lord, I am the enjoyer, I am perfect, powerful and happy.

XVI-15. I am wealthy, highly born. Who else can equal me in grandeur ? Being deluded by such vanity, he proclaims that who else other than he will perform grand sacrifices will give such grand alms, and will obtain such happy rejoicings.

XVI-16. Bewildered by numerous conflicting thoughts, enmeshed in the web of delusion, addicted to the gratification of desires, they fall downwards into a foul hell.

XVI-17. Over-borne with high self-esteem and vanity, wealth-intoxicated, they perform lip-sacrifices for ostentation contrary to established rules.

XVI-18. Overpowered by egoism, power, arrogance, desires and anger, busy ever in talking ill of others, they practically despise and hate Me seated in the bodies of others and in their own.

B(2)—DESTINY OF MEN OF ASURIC NATURE.
(XVI—19 & 20)

Daivi Nature is evolutionary, while Asuric Nature is involutionary. The self-dwelling in the hearts of human beings is by nature struggling to evolve out its original Divinity. An Asuric man works as his own enemy by creating impediments in the way of his Spirit's inner urge for evolution. His evil tendencies keep him confined in lower nature from birth to birth under the law of karma.

XVI-19. The Lord says :—I cast down these haters of mankind, cruel and vile sinners again and again into impure degenerated Asuric wombs.

XVI-20. Thus cast down into demonical wombs, entrapped in delusion from birth to birth, they sink down into the lowest depths of ignorance instead of attaining Me, O Kaunteya !

B(3)—BREEDING SOURCES OF ASURIC NATURE.
(XVI—21 & 22.)

Desire, anger and greed are the main springs and footholds of Asuric nature. They are like the wide open gates to plunge a man into perdition. If he is not alert to divert his path from this precipitous fall he eventually finds the Asur full grown in him, and he goes on plunging deeper and deeper in Ignorance until he touches the dark bottom of the Hell. It is only when he realises by experience the evils and

pitfalls of his Asuric nature, that he is obliged to divert his thought to abandon this dark path of Ignorance, and turn towards Light and Truth. This dark power of Maya serves as a means to correct, chastise and teach him to come round on the path of Spiritual evolution. As a result of this turn, he gets into the Satvic way, which leads him to perfection and freedom.

XVI-21. The Lord says :—Desire, wrath and greed are the three-fold doors of hell leading to the perdition of the soul. They must therefore be abandoned.

XVI-22. A man liberated from these three gates of Ignorance, O son of Kunti, accomplishes his own welfare and attains highest Divine goal.

B(4)—GEETA SHASTRA IS AN INFALLIBLE GUIDE TO CONQUER ASURIC NATURE. (XVI—23 & 24)

In every country and in every religion, Divine seekers and advanced souls have laid down rules of conduct for Spiritual advancement based on personal experience. They constitute authoritative standards enjoined upon to be religiously followed. These standards of conduct however differ from country to country and from nation to nation because they are man-made laws conforming to the special environments, climatic conditions and to many other diverse factors of the country to which they belong. The standards of conduct leading to Spiritual unfoldment as laid down in the Geeta are authoritative torch bearers on the Divine Path leading to the well-being of humanity as a whole. It is this Geeta Shastra referred to in the last verse of the last chapter which leads a man to highest perfection. Its method is so comprehensive and universal, that it would suit the entire humanity living in any country and following any religion. It is the safest guide for a normal man to follow for his Spiritual uplift. Any deviation from it may prove perilous, because the Rajsic or Tamsic nature of the reformer is

likely to deform its highest Spiritual principles in the light of his own unripe mental concepts.

XVI-23. The Lord says :— He who rejecting the rules of this Shastra, indulges in desire-prompted actions, attains neither Spiritual perfection nor happiness, nor the highest aspired goal.

XVI-24. Therefore, let this Shastra be your guide in determining what ought to be done, or what ought not to be done. Knowing what has been declared by the ordinances of this scripture, you ought to work in this world

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Thus comes to end chapter XVI styled "The Yoga by discrimination between the Divine and demonical heritages'.

CHAPTER XVII

A 1)—GEETA SHASTRA IS AN INVIOLABLE GUIDE FOR SPIRITUAL UPLIFT. (XVII—1.)

Rules of conduct prescribed in the Shastra has been declared to be a sole authority and guide for taking a decision in the conduct of one's life. The Shastra has behind it all the authority of long-established rule, and well-tried successful sanctions, based on secure past experiences of those who had inner Spiritual vision. The most secret Geeta Shastra referred to in chapter XV-20 is an infallible guide to a Spiritual seeker. It deals with Spiritual principles which are eternal, inviolable and consecrating, and can never become obsolete by lapse of time or by any amount of intellectual progress. It has the backing of Divine Wisdom experienced by the seers possessed of Divine Knowledge.

But an intellectual rationalist proud of his pragmatic knowledge gets impatient to discard this sound practical knowledge as outdated. This nausea and impatience has no doubt justification at times for a reform of some old narrow-minded social customs that creep in into the society under the garb of religion claiming an authority from the Shastra. One who has universal outlook realises that it is the Divine Knowledge (Vigyan) that is secretly working as mental knowledge though discoloured and diluted by separative tendencies. This separative mental knowledge has given rise to various man-made social and moral laws of conduct; which at times differ from nation to nation. They are by long usage given the sanctity of a Shastra, and then they become responsible for several inequities, injustices and even inhuman cruelties in social order, like the Inquisition tribunal of Roman Catholic Church in the middle ages. Such mental interpretations of scriptures prove a bane and a curse against the uplift and well-being not only of the individual

but also of the society as a whole, specially because they are made to bear a label of narrow religionism.

These man-made mental laws are temporary make-shifts to suit a particular stage of civilisation besides climatic conditions, environments and other exigencies of the country. A change of such conditions render them obsolete and harmful for the progress of the society. The result is a mushroom-growth of reformers from time to time. Their impatience for reform in the social order may be justifiable, but they have no right to touch the Spiritual Laws of soul's uplift which are ever constant and invoilable. An attempt to alter or misinterpret the Spiritual laws will drag them down to mental level, and will colour them with Satvic, Rajsic, or Tamsic nature of the reformer. The Shastra described in the Geeta replete with eternal Spiritual laws, working in the Cosmos as well as in the individual, will ever remain an inviolable rigid constitution for our guidance in the conduct of our life in the Trigunatmic conditions of this world.

A true Divine seeker imbued with the ambition of realising Spiritual consciousness scrupulously follows the guidance of this Shastra. But a pseudo-apostle of the Divine still subjected to the domination of Gunas may attempt to propagate a new theory of his own with full faith of success in carrying himself and his followers to perfection, and may thereby disturb long established sound doctrines of the Shastra. Naturally a question arises if such a new adventure in the Unknown, will prove more efficacious than the guidance of the Shastra for achievement of the Divine goal (Nishtha), or whether such an attempt of reformation will drag down and tinge the high Spiritual principles with the general Trigunatmic character of mundane existence. This chapter thus commences with a question that is often asked, as to what is the status of a man who sets aside injunctions of the Shastra, and invents a new reform of his own with full faith in the rightness of what he is doing. Arjun thus puts this pertinent question to the Lord saying :—

XVII-1 O Lord Krishna, what is the culmination of the efforts of those who although aspire and sacrifice for the Divine with full faith, but discard the injunctions of the Shastra ? Whether it is Satvic, Rajsic or Tamsic ?

A (2)—FAITH IS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ORIGIN OF ACTION. (XVII—2 & 3)

This question involves an inquiry into the deeply hidden originative psychological principles that contribute to the initiation of action Ordinarily it is the faith or conviction of a man in the truth of a particular objective, that prompts his will to act for its achievement In the absence of faith there is no impetus for action For creation of faith, it is essential to obtain first-hand knowledge about the utility of the objective For instance, we know that a ripe mango fruit is delicious and good for health, and therefore, have an unhesitating faith in its utility and proceed to acquire it But if some unknown forest fruit comes before us, we will naturally hesitate to acquire it much less to eat it unless we have full knowledge of its utility and effects on our system For want of knowledge there is no faith in the object and no will to acquire it Thus Knowledge begets faith, faith begets will, and will begets action Knowledge, faith and will are thus the primary orientative psychological factors that result in the initiation of action. Nature of action varies from man to man depending on his knowledge, faith and will Motive or will of a man of Satvic knowledge and faith will differ from that of a man of Rajsic or Tamsic faith Motive controls the results, and the nature of motive accounts for the difference in the outcome of their action although its outer form may ostensibly remain the same.

Satvic faith is the result of higher mental knowledge while Rajsic faith is the outcome of desiredriven knowledge, and Tamsic faith is the result of Ignorance There is also super-conscient supra-mental or Vigyan consciousness involved

in man, which if developed will produce real Divine faith and Divine will for acting as a Divine worker The Purush (the Jiva) is the creature of the Divine Will "to become Many," and Divine faith is the Spiritual essence of his constitution. He is not the ego or mental self, or desire self or physical self, but is the pure Divine Self constituted of Divine knowledge, Divine Faith and Divine Will Purush is thus described as "Shradha-maya" or constituted of Divine Faith For evolution of a man into his original Divine status, it is the Divine will in him that works as Yoga-Shakti the true "will to be" the Divine Himself On the Spiritual levels the Divine Will in man originates from Divine faith of this being one in essence with the Divine On the mental level this Divine faith or Shradha is subjected to the tests of his intellect and reason, and results in mental conviction (Vishwas). Lower down in the levels of personal desires, his faith and will are tinged with Rajsic nature Thus the Jiva or Purush on getting enveloped in mental, desire and physical sheaths transforms his original Divine Faith and Divine Will into mental, desire and physical faith and will of Satvic, Rajsic and Tamsic natures respectively By a scrutiny of a man's natural tendencies propelled by his faith and will, we can at once judge of what stuff he is made, namely whether he is a man of *Rajsic*, *Satvic* or *Tamsic* temperament Modern psychologists employ almost similar nature of tests for judging a man's natural aptitude. It is therefore said that it is the faith of a man that is the deciding factor to ascertain of what internal fabric he is constituted (Yo yat shraddha sa eva sah).

Faith (Shraddha) is sometimes confused with intellectual belief (Vishwas), based upon a weighing of probabilites, but it is only a reasoned opinion which is no guarantee of infallibility There is also a blind belief of ordinary people rooted not on reason, but on blind acceptance of credulous orthodoxies, and long established heard instincts. True faith is of a much higher nature based on Spiritual Knowledge, all inclusive, Cosmic, harmonious, and

untinged by ego, mind or senses. Faith of a rationalist is of a separative mental nature. It accepts only the data of senses and logical conclusions of the mind upon them. The possessors of true Divine faith (Shraddha) accept the data coming from spiritual experience, and proceed to work over them until they can express them in a form consonant with reason. It is unsafe to blindly rely on any new reform for Divine approach unless the reformer is himself possessed of Divine faith and Divine Knowledge

XVII-2 The Lord says :—That faith of embodied human beings is of three kinds born out of their inherent nature, namely Satvic, Rajsic or Tamsic. Now hear about these from Me.

XVII-3 O Bharat, Shraddha of each man depends on the constitutional stuff of his being. The Purush or the Self in man is constituted of Divine faith and Divine Will. As is the faith of a man, similar is the fabric of his inner nature.

A (3)—NATURE OF FAITH DETERMINES FORMS OF WORSHIP. (XVII—4)

Spiritual aspirations of a man differ according to the nature of his faith. Similar is the case with the methods that he chooses to adopt for achievement of his aspired goal. The quality of his faith even determines his choice of food, and the nature of the prescribed daily duties of Yagna, Tap and Dan. The highest aspiration of Satvic faith attracts a man towards the worship of Nature gods, and that of Rajsic Faith towards the adoration of Mammon god (Yaksha Kuber), as well as the fierce titanic powers of might (Rakshas). The highest aspiration of Tamsic Faith drives him towards adoration of elementals and lower spirits, whom they believe to be sources of their temporal good and evil happenings. Superstition and blind belief in evil spirits and witch-craft play an important role in their life.

XVII-4 The Lord says :—Men of Satvic faith adore Nature gods, those of Rajsic faith adore Yaksha and Rakshasas. Others of Tamsic faith adore elemental powers and grosser spirits

A (4) VIOLENT PRACTICES OF WORSHIP (TAP) ARE ASURIC (XVII-5 & 6)

Nature of Faith determines the character of actions for achievement of the aspired Spiritual goal. Geeta does not favour the practice of undertaking arduous penances involving self torture, since they amount to a torture not only of the body senses and mind, but also of the Divine seated in the hearts of men. Such violent penances may be prompted by the best motives of self advancement, but since they do not conform to psychological methods pointed out by the Geeta Shastra, they are described as opposed to Shastra (Ashastra).

XVII-5. The Lord says :—Those who perform tortuous penances not enjoined by the Shastra, wedded to vanity egoism, and impelled by desires and passions,

XVII-6. such men of unripe knowledge torment the aggregated elements forming the body, and also torture Me seated in their hearts. Know such men to be Asuric in their resolves.

A (5)—NATURE OF FAITH DETERMINES CHOICE OF FOOD (XVII—7 to 10)

Relish for food and taste differs from man to man because of his inherent quality of nature. Similarly, the nature of sacred religious performances of Yagna, Tap and Dan differ from man to man according to the quality of his nature. The body is built of the food that is taken into it. Thus food plays an important source of stimulating sense-life.

Thus sense-life and its nature determines the taste for food, and also the nature of activities of daily life.

XVII 7. The Lord says :—The quality of food that one relishes is of triple character, and so also is the nature of sacrifice, askesis and charitable offerings. Hear from Me the distinctions of these.

XVII-8. The foods that nourish and increase life, strengthen the body, produce energy, health, joy, cheerfulness, and that are delicious, substantial, and agreeable, are dear to a man of Satvic nature.

XVII-9. The foods that are bitter, highly sour, saltish, over-hot, pungent, juiceless, acrid and irritating, and which produce pain, grief and sickness, are dear to a man of Rajsic nature.

XVII-10. A man of Tamsic temperament takes delight in foods that are cold, impure, stale, rotten or tasteless, and even unclean leavings.

B (1)— NATURE OF FAITH DETERMINES THE CHARACTER OF YAGNA (SACRIFICE)

(XVII—11 to 13)

All activities of a man are propelled by the inherent nature of his faith. Sacrifice (Yagna), physical efforts (tap), and self-giving (Dan) constitute the normal three essential elements of every action. In the process of launching upon an action, one has first to sacrifice his personal comforts, time, money besides his mind and intellect to devise ways and means for success. Execution of action is the second stage which involves vital energism, and concentrated application of full physical capacity of the body (Tap). Such personal efforts are accompanied by the third stage of an offering of one's heart in the cause not only mentally and emotionally, but financially and materially as well (Dan). These three elements of action differ in actual practice and execution according to the nature and faith of the actor.

Shri Aurovindo says that "All dynamic action may be reduced in its essential parts to these three elements (Yagna, Tap and Dan). For, all dynamic action, all kinesis of nature involves a voluntary or involuntary Tapasya, and energism and concentration of our forces and capacities, which help us to achieve, to acquire, or to become something (Tapas). All action involves a giving of what we are, or have, an expenditure which is the price of that achievement (Dan). All action involves too a sacrifice to elemental or universal powers, or to Supreme Master of works. The question is whether we do these things inconsciently, passively, or at best with an unintelligent, ignorant, half-conscient will or with a wisely conscient will rooted in Knowledge. In other words, whether our sacrifice, giving, and askesis are Tamsic, Rajsic, or Satvic in nature'.

These three constituents of action (Yagna, Tap and Dan) performed by a man of Satvic nature, widely differ in nature, motive, outlook and even in the process of execution, from those stimulated by Rajsic and Tamsic nature of the actor To a man of Spiritual faith, Yagna is the Cosmic Divine work aimed at the welfare, happiness, harmony, and uplift of the entire existence. He aspires to participate in the Divine work, and acts as an instrument of Divine Will, surrendering his ego, mind, senses, and body to the Divine. A man of Satvic faith retains the sense of being an actor, and acts in consonance with the injunctions and principles laid down by the Shastra, without desiring any fruit in return. A man of Rajsic faith performs Yagna, Tap and Dan suitable to his egoistic temperament, with a prominent desire for fruits in return. A man of Tamsic faith indulges in his characteristic demonic way in the performance of these religious duties.

Highest attainment of sacrifice (Yagna) is beautifully described by Shri Aurovindo as follows :—

'Satvic sacrifice comes very near to the ideal, and leads directly towards the kind of action demanded by the Gita,

but it is not the last and higher ideal, it is not yet the action of a perfected man who lives in the Divine nature For, it is carried out as a fixed Dharma, and it is offerred as a sacrifice or service to the gods, or to some partial power or aspect of the Divine manifested in the Universe Work done with a disinterested religious faith, or selflessly for humanity, or impersonally from devotion to the Right or the Truth, is of this Satvic nature Action of that kind is necessary for our perfection, for it purifies our thought, will, and natural substance"

'The culmination of the Satvic action at which we have to arrive is of a still larger and freer kind. It is the high last sacrifice offered by us to the Supreme Divine in His integral being, and with a seeking for the Purushottam, or with the vision of Vasudeo in all that is It is the action done impersonally, universally for the good of the world, for the fulfilment of the Divine Will in the Universe. That culmination leads to its own transcending to the Immortal Dharma For, then comes a freedom in which there is no personal action at all, no Satvic rule of Dharma, no limita-tion of Shastra The inferior reason and will are themselves overpassed, and it is not they but a higher Wisdom that dictates and guides the work and commands its objective There is no question of personal fruit, for the will that works is not our own, but a Supreme Will of which the soul is an instrument. There is no self-regarding and no self-lessness, for the Jiva, the eternal portion of the Divine, is united with the highest Self of his existence He and all are one in That, the Master of our works and it is He that does the action through the divinised Prakriti. There is no sacrifice—unless we can say that the Master of Sacrifice is offering the works of His energy in the Jiva to Himself in His own Cosmic Form This is the Supreme self-surpassing state arrived at by the action that is sacri-fice This is the perfection of the soul that has come to its full consciousness in the Divine Nature'

XVII-11 The Lord says —The sacrifice offered as an essential duty without desire for personal fruit in return, executed in accordance with the injunctions of the Shastra, and with full concentration of will and faith, such sacrifice is Satvic

XVII-12. O best of the Bharats, the sacrifice offered with a design to earn a personal fruit in return, and by way of ostentation, know it to have been impelled by Rajsic nature.

XVII-13 The sacrifice performed in derogation of the injunctions of Shastra, without offering gifts and food to others, and without the dedicated thoughts (Mantra) of concentrated will and faith in the Divine, is said to be Tamsic

B (2)—DISCIPLINE (TAP) OF BODY, SPEECH AND MIND (XVII—14 to 16)

Self-discipline is an important step of spiritual evolution. Geeta lays stress on self discipline by psychological practices of mind and sense control. It discards the ascetic practices of torture of the body by paralysing the nervous system and the natural functions of senses The body is the sole instrument of action, and to weaken or destroy it by injudicious austerities is to destory a valuable instrument. The true attitude towards our body should be to treat it as a riding horse, something to be intelligently disciplined, adequately cared for, and properly used, and not as something either to be allowed to wander off its own free will, or else to be beaten to death or incapacity Mortification of outer senses leaves the astral senses intact lying deep within in the sub-conscious mind awaiting an opportunity to burst out with vengeance Geeta prescribes such practices of self discipline (Tap) as are within the capacity of a normal human being to pursue. Self discipline includes

not only the discipline of the body, but also the discipline of speech and mind.

XVII-14. The Lord says :—The following are said to be the austerities of the body.

(i) Reverence and worship of gods, twice born spiritual guide, and to those possessed of divine wisdom.

(ii) Purity (both inner and outer),

(iii) Straightforwardness and candidness,

(iv) Continence and other practices of treading the Divine path (Brahmacharyam),

(v) Non-injury to others either by thought or speech or action.

XVII-15. Speech causing no annoyance, but truthful, pleasant and beneficial, and indulgence in the study of scriptures are called the austerity of speech.

XVII-16. Mental happiness, equanimity, silence, self-control, purity of nature, all these are called the austerities of mind.

B (3)—NATURE OF FAITH DETERMINES THE CHARACTER OF TAP (XVII—17 to 19)

The aforesaid disciplines of body, mind and speech (Mansa, vacha, karmana) purify and quiten the Rajsic and Tamsic nature, and replace it by the happy and tranquil principles of good and virtue, if they are performed with Satvic faith. This purity is however disturbed if the motive and faith of the actor is Rajsic or Tamsic. The culmination of Satvic Tap is a high purity of reason and will, and a preparatory step into the spiritual world.

Shri Aurovindo says, "This is the askesis of the Satvic Dharma so highly prized in the system of the ancient Indian culture. Its greatest culmination will be a high purity of reason and will, an equal soul, a deep peace and a calm wide

sympathy, and preparation of oneness, a reflection of the inner soul's Divine gladness in the mind, life and body. And this culmination can be made to transcend itself, can be raised into a higher and freer light, can pass away into the settled god-like energy of the Supreme nature. And what will remain then will be the spirit's immaculate Tapas, a highest will and luminous force in all members, acting in a wide and solid calm, and a deep and pure spiritual delight (Anand) There will be no further need of askesis, no Tapasya, because all is naturally and easily Divine, all is that Tapas There will be no separate labour of lower energism because the energy of the Prakriti will have found its true source and base in the transcendent Will of the Purushottam. Then because of this high initiation the acts of this energy will proceed naturally and spontaneously from an innate perfect will, and an inherent perfect guidance There will be no limitation by any of the present Dharmas, for there will be a free action far above the Rajsic and Tamsic nature, but also far beyond the too careful and narrow limits of the Satvic rule of action"

XVII-17. The Lord says:—This threefold austerity performed by men with utmost faith, without desire for fruit and harmonised is said to be Satvic.

XVII-18 The austerity practised with the object of gaining respect, honour and worship, and for ostentation, is fleeting unstable and Rajsic

XVII-19 The austerity practised and guided by deluded foolish concepts, with self-torture, or with the object of injuring others is said to be Tamsic

B (4)—NATURE OF FAITH DETERMINES THE CHARACTER OF CHARITABLE OFFERINGS (DAN) (XVII—20 to 22)

Charitable offerings (Dan) include not only the offerings of financial and other material help, but also the offering of

heart in the act Mere material offering without 'a dedication of heart or such offerings which are made for ostentation, name or fame, or under pressure and against will, or for an undeserving cause, have no efficacy in the uplift of our egoistic nature

To quote Shri Aurovindo, "the culmination of the Satvic way of Dan will bring into action an increasing element of that wide self-giving to others and to the world and to God, which is the high consecration of the sacrifice of works enjoined by the Gita. And the transcendence in the Divine Nature will be a greatest completeness of self-offering, founded on the largest meaning of existence All the manifold Universe comes into birth and is constantly maintained by God's giving of Himself and His powers, and the lavish outflow of His Self and Spirit into all these existences. Universal being (Virat Purush) says the Veda, is the sacrifice of the Purush All the action of the perfected soul will be such a Divine giving of itself and its powers·· on all around it. That will be the result of the complete self-giving of the soul to the Master of our existence"

The qualitative nature of an offering varies with the nature of faith of the donor. Satvic offering purifies the lower nature and culminates in the entire giving of self to the Divine and to the world Rajsic and Tamsic offerings keep a man enchained in the meshes of lower nature

XVII-20 The Lord says .—Satvic offering is said to be that which is prompted by a sense of duty without expectation of any return from the donee, and that which is offered with a due consideration of its usefulness in relation to the occasion, time, and the cause

XVII-21. The Rajsic offering is said to be that which is prompted by a desire for some return from the donee, or that which is offered with the sole object of achieving a desired result, or that offered grudgingly and painfully

XVII-22. The offering given without due consideration of the right conditions of time, place and object to an undeserving person, and that too disrespectfully and contemptuously is said to be Tamsic.

C (1)—THREE STATES OF BRAHMAN EXISTENCE (XVII—23)

The Lord has so far described the nature of actions of Satvic, Rajsic and Tamsic natures. But a man who has crossed over the Trigunas, and has attained Divine consciousness is also enjoined upon to continue to perform actions consisting of Yagna, Tap and Dan Naturally a question arises as to what would be the character of actions of such a divinised personality Faith is described to be the cardinal principle to determine the character of actions. This principle applies not only to a man of Trigunatmic nature, but also to a man of Spiritual nature. Nature of Yagna, Tap and Dan of even a divinised person varies with his faith in the Divine status which he aspires to attain. Geeta describes three states of Brahman existence, and consequently three classes of devotees aspiring for attainment of one or the other of these states Faith of one class of devotee differs from that of another, so far as his aspiration for highest Divine realisation is concerned, and consequently there is a difference in their motives in the performance of Yagna, Tap and Dan

Geeta describes three states of Brahman existence as follows —

(1) **Aum Brahman**—This is the Supreme Brahman Status of the unmanifested Purushottam, the One without a second, which cannot be said to be either existence or non existence (Satannasat Uchyate) This Supreme Brahman Status is not only the unmanifested Divine state, but also the entire manifested existence of Akshar and Kshar Brahman. To describe this Supreme Status in speech one

has to start with the sound 'A' by slowly opening the mouth, and then by the sound 'U' by the wide open mouth to cover the entire existence by that sound, and finally by the sound 'M' by closing the mouth after traversing the unimaginable expanse of the Supreme This Purushottam status is therefore indicated (Nirdesho) to our understanding by the all-pervasive One-syllabled Supra-Cosmic word "AUM."

(2) **Tat.Brahman**—The Supreme Purushottam manifests as positive existence (Sat), positive consciousness (Chit) and positive bliss (Anand), as the One composite Sat chidananda Brahman In the initial stage this manifested Brahman is a static and potential existence known as Nirgun Akshar Brahman. This static Brahman status being beyond the dynamic Kshar existence in which we live, is denoted by the term Tat-Brahman or That Brahman as if by a finger indication.

(3) **Sat-Brahman**—As the process of manifestation develops, the Static Nirguna Sat-chidananda assumes a dynamic character resulting in the Cosmic multiple creation of Sagun Kshar existence This Vyakta existence is the Sat or concrete positive condition, and is indicated by the term Sat Brahman. The word Sat is also understood to imply the sense of Reality or Truth as opposed to the illusive unreality (Maya) of the manifested creation Sat is not a synonym of "Satya." Sat means positive concrete existence, while Satya means truth. They are altogether different words Sat no doubt embodies Satya (Truth), and may, therefore be interpreted as Truth, but by itself it means the positive manifested aspect of Sat chidananda This implication of the term Sat is fortified by verses 26 & 27 which speak of all temporal good, benevolent and meritorious

actions as Sat Lokmanya Tilak in his commentary on Geeta on page 244 to 246 has come to this very conclusion about the meaning of the term Sat, after a detailed analysis of the use of that term in Taitariya and Chhandogya Upnishads and Brahman sutras. This term Sat is taken to mean the Vyakta or positive existence of name and form, and therefore, it is said to include all good benevolent and praiseworthy actions performed in this world. The dynamic Kshar existence is thus (Vyakta) or the Sat Brahman existence The two unmanifested higher Spiritual existences are separately termed as Tat Brahman and Aum-Brahman existences. (Avyakta)

There are three classes of devotees corresponding to their aspirations for attainment of either of these Brahman States

(a) **Devotees of Aum Brahman**—Devotees of Supreme Purushottam or of Aum Brahman status seek Union with Him in Spiritual essence by identity (Sayujya). They become Brahman-possessed in their entire being, and are called Brahmanas

(b) **Devotees of Tat Brahman**—Gyanis devote themselves to the attainment of Nirgun Tat Brahman Status, and aspire to become one with it and to in dwell in that Static Divine Status on attainment of liberation (Moksha) from the dynamism of illusive Kshar existence (Maya) They are the knowers of the Divine Knowledge (Vedas), and attainment of Moksha is their highest aspiration

(c) **Devotees of Sat Brahman**—Devotees of Sagun Sat Brahman aspire to dwell in constant presence of their beloved Lord, and to enjoy the Divine ecstatic Lila in this dynamic existence They also participate in the Cosmic Divine Works (Yagna)

and are, therefore, the knowers of the inner sense of Yagna.

This seems to be esoteric implication of the following verse, which ascribes the origin of Brahmanas from Aum Brahman, of Vedas from Tat Brahman, and of Yagnas from Sat Brahman.

XVII-23. The Lord Says :—Brahman is remembered by threefold indications (Nirdesho) of Aum, Tat, and Sat from whom were created Brahmanas, Vedas and Yagnas in ancient past.

C(2) - FAITH DETERMINES NATURE OF YAGNA, TAP AND DAN OF LIBERATED PERSONS. (XVII–24 to 27)

(1) Actions of the devotees of Aum Brahman :—

Geeta advocates continuance of actions of Yagna, Tap and Dan even by a person who has realised the Divine. As stated above there are three classes of devotees aspiring for realisation of one or the other of the three Status of Brahman. Their motives in the performance of actions differ according to their aspirations. Devotees of Aum Brahman commence their actions of Yagna, Tap and Dan as dedications to Him. These devotees of Aum Brahman (Purushottam) seek union in Spiritual essence by identity. A Union by identity means a liberation and change of our being into the Supreme Spirit, a change of consciousness into that Divine consciousness, a lifting of soul state into the ecstasy of Spiritual beatitude and calm eternal Bliss. All actions are turned into Divine actions.

XVII-24. The Lord says :—Therefore the aspirants of Supreme Brahman always commence their actions of Yagna, Tap and Dan laid down by the Shastra as dedications to Him by prefixing them with the utterance of Aum.

(2) Actions of the devotees of Tat Brahman :—

Liberation from the dynamism of Kshar existence, believed to be an hypnotic illusion (Maya), is the sole aim and aspiration of a Gyani He seeks Union with the Static Divine or Tat Brahman on attaining Moksha This luminous in-dwelling in the Static Divine secures safety against any fall or exile into the lower consciousness of ignorance

XVII-25 The Lord says :—Devotees of Nirgun Tat Brahman aspiring for Moksha (Liberation from lower nature), perform Yagna, Tap and Dan as dedications in the name of Tat Brahman freed from desires for fruit

(3) Actions of the devotees of Sagun Sat Brahman :—

An aspirant of Sagun Sat Brahman aspires to enjoy constant presence of the Lord, and to participate in the Divine Lila of Cosmic action as a Divine Worker Since this aspiration is not to be fructified in some other existence beyond, on death, but has to be pursued and discovered here on earth during life time It can only be by a descent of the Divine Truth, by the establishment here of the soul's native world of light, joy, freedom and oneness in one's own being A Union of the instrumental being no less than of the soul, must change the imperfect nature of the devotee into the very likeness and image of Divine Nature (Sadharma) It must put off the blind, mutilated, and discordant movements of Ignorance, and put on the inherence of Divine Light, peace, bliss, harmony, universality, mastery, purity, and perfection It must convert itself into an instrument of Divine Will and Divine Power, and become a channel of Divine Love, Joy, Beauty and Divine Work. The devotee of Sagun Brahman, therefore, remains replete with the highest motives of goodness, kindness and helpfulness towards the welfare of all creatures, and is ever intent upon doing altruistic and humanitarian works of magnanimous

character His acts of Yagna, Tap and Dan are actuated by such motives, and all other magnanimous acts are performed by him as part of the Divine Yagna by way of dedication to the Sat Brahman. The devotee thus attains Samipya, Salokya, and Sadharmya liberation

XVII-26. The Lord says·–O Parth, all good and benevolent emotions and actions are carried out as dedications in the name of Sat Brahman Similarly all praiseworthy and meritorious works are performed with the utterance of the word Sat

XVII-27 The enlightenment resulting from the performance of Yagna, Tap and Dan is also spoken of as Sat All actions for achievement of Tat Brahman status are also classified as Sat Brahman actions

C (3)—FAITH IS THE DECIDING FACTOR OF THE EFFICACY OF ALL ACTIONS (XVII–28)

Faith is the pivot around which all actions rotate. Its nature colours the motive and form of all activities of our life. An action performed formally without any faith in its efficacy is a mere lifeless mechanism, yielding no result Even the meritorious actions of Yagna, Tap and Dan, if performed without faith remain ineffective for Spiritual progress in our lifetime on earth, or in the worlds beyond after death

Shri Aurovindo says that, "Shraddha is the central principle of our existence, any of these Yagna, Tap and Dan done without Shraddha is a falsity and has no true meaning or true substance on earth or beyond, no reality, no power to endure or create in life here or after the mortal life in greater region of our Conscious Spirit. The soul's faith, not a mere intellectual belief but its concordant will to

know, to see, to believe, and to do—is that which determines by its power the measure of our possibilities of becoming. It is this Faith and Will turned in all our inner and outer self, nature, and action towards all that is highest, most Divine, most real and eternal, that will enable us to reach the Supreme perfection".

XVII-28. The Lord says :—The result of sacrificial offerings, of charitable offerings (Dan), and of askesis (Tap), if performed without Faith is futile. It offers no benefit to the actor either in this world, or in the worlds beyond after death.

Thus comes to an end Chapter XVII styled as "Divisions of Triple Shraddha".

CHAPTER XVIII

A (1)—DISTINCTION BETWEEN PHYSICAL RENUNCIATION (SANYAS) AND MENTAL RENUNCIATION (TYAG) (XVIII—1)

The last chapter has dwelt upon the nature of actions performed not only by a man living in Trigunatmic conditions, but also upon nature of actions performed by one who has crossed over the Gunas and has realised the Divine consciousness. Performance of actions is notconsidered incompatible with the Divine realisations A realised person has been specifically advised in Chapter III to perform all actions which an ordinary man performs, although with a change in the ordinary angle of vision and with mental detachment He is to set an example to the world about the motive and the angle of vision with which actions should be performed in order to lead the masses on the right path by his conduct This view has also been advocated in the Upnishadic period Ish-Upnishad in verses 1 & 2 emphatically asserts that one should enjoy the world by acting with detachment, and should desire to live a hundred years doing all works and not refraining from them It is further pointed out that it is thus by means of detachment, that action cleaves not to a man, and not by physical renunciation of the world and its actions

Sankhya philosophy, and the illusive theory of Mayavad about Sanyas later on gained much predominance. The world and its actions were explained as virtual illusive deceptions of mind, intended to keep a man enchained to the lower nature. The only remedy for spiritual uplift was thus found to be none other than complete withdrawl from the world by taking sanyas, and to lead a life of a stoic in a secluded cave on a hill top If this view is correct, it cuts away all possibilities of there being any help for man from

know, to see, to believe, and to do—is that which determines by its power the measure of our possibilities of becoming. It is this Faith and Will turned in all our inner and outer self, nature, and action towards all that is highest, most Divine, most real and eternal, that will enable us to reach the Supreme perfection".

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his liberated brothers, for he who acts is still in bondage, and he who is liberated cannot act.

These contradictory views of Mayavadins and of the stress on action laid by the Lord from place to place in the discourse of Geeta, created confusion in Arjun's mind, which was from the very beginning enamoured of the theory of Sanyas He therefore becomes anxious to once more ascertain from the Lord,as to whether physical renunciation of action (Sanyas) or the continuance of action with mental renunciation (Tyag) would be the safest guide for spiritual uplift. This chapter thus starts with this pertinent question of Arjun.

XVIII-1 Arjun says :—O Mighty-armed, O Omniscient Lord, O Vasudeva, I desire to know separately the distinction between the true significance of the principle of physical renunciation (Sanyas) and of the inner renunciation (Tyag).

A(2)—DIVERSE THEORIES OF RENUNCIATION (SANYAS), AND THE DECISIVE OPINION OF THE LORD

(XVIII—2 to 6)

The question of Arjun demands a clear distinction between the outer renunciation (Sanyas) and inner renunciation (Tyag). Geeta has always laid stress on inner renunciation, but the subsequent Indian thought gave strong bent towards belittling this sound doctrine, treating it at the most a preliminary step for developing complete physical inaction of Sanyas. Tyag and Sanyas were interpreted as synonymous terms both implying the sense of physical withdrawal from all actions. It seems that at time when the Geeta discourse was delivered, Sanyas w understood by sages in the sense of physical withdr- from only desire-prompted actions, and not from all ac- Tyag was distinguished as implying inner renunci-

fruits of action, and not their physical abnigation Some intellectual thinkers (Manishinah) however considered all actions as sources of evil, and advocated physical withdrawal from them. This was not a generally accepted view, and there was a divergence of opinion on the point Some of them were against withdrawal from the highly purifying actions of Yagna, Dan and Tap performed for the welfare of humanity and of the world at large. All actions involving personal sacrifice, and action of charitable and altruistic nature (Dan) for the welfare of the world at large, and actions of personal purification of mind, senses and body (Tap) were considered absolutely essential for spiritual progress.

The decisive opinion of the Lord was in favour of inner renunciation (Tyag), Yagna, Dan and Tap contributed to the purification of the inner and outer being of even the wisest profound thinker and they were advised not to be abandoned in any case. The Lord further added that in addition to these, all such actions must be performed which were demanded of a man as an imperative duty towards his family, community, country, or nation, but free from all desire for a fruit in return

Total renunciation has been accepted by all schools of philosophical thought as the sole means of spiritual uplift In its true sense it does not mean physical withdrawal from all actions by immobility or inertia True renunciation or Sanyas implies a spiritual significance and not a mundane inactivity. It means dedication of all actions to the Divine by whose power alone can any action be accomplished. There has to be a renunciation of the false idea of ourselves as the doer. Spiritual transference of all our works to the Divine who is the Master of Works, devoid of all hankerings for a fruit in return is the real esoteric sense of Sanyas in the decisive view of the Lord. In order to attain this state of true Sanyas, practice of mental renunciation free from a desire for fruit in return is the sole method An emphasis

on such mental renunciation (Tyag) has therefore been given by the Lord for spiritual uplift

XVIII-2 The Lord says Sages have known abnigation of desire-prompted actions as Sanyas. The wise declare relinquishment of fruit of actions as Tyag.

XVIII-3 Some intellectual thinkers advocate relinquishment of all actions treating them as inherent evil Others hold that Yagna, Dan and Tap should not in any case be relinquished.

XVIII 4 O best of Bharats, hear from Me My decisive opinion about mental renunciation (Tyag). O tiger among men, this inner renunciation is spoken of as being of three mental levels

XVIII-5. All acts of Yagna, Dan, and Tap are not fit for abnigation, but have to be performed since these acts of Yagna, Dan and Tap are purifiers of even the profound spiritual thinkers (Manishanah)

XVIII-6 Not only these acts, but also all other acts should be performed relinquishing attachment and desire for fruit This is My decisive Supreme opinion.

A (3)—TRUE IMPORT OF INNER RENUNCIATION (TYAG) AND ITS CULMINATION

(XVIII—7 to 11)

Performance of all actions which a man's duty towards his family, country or humanity demands, free from any hankering or desire for fruit, is said to constitute mental renunciation (Tyag). This is not so easy to practise as it might apparently appear The motive and manner of translating it into practice thus differs from man to man according to his nature This is because mental renunciation of a fruit of action is found straining and even painful to

begin with so long as one has not developed complete faith and surrender to the Divine Will All actions are to be performed with proper control of mind, senses and body, and strictly within the moral code prescribed by the Shastra.

Attempts to avoid displeasure or unpopularity and various worldly attachments may dissuade a man from performing his duty Such abstinence from action is virtually no renunciation either physical or mental, but is a mere Tamsic refrainment He may as well abstain from an action because it involves physical suffering and pain This is an avoidance of the struggle of life to perform a duty, or to uphold a righteous cause in which it is obligatory on him to plunge and sacrifice his personal comforts Such withdrawal from an action is ineffective for spiritual progress and is called Rajsic renunciation Performance of actions which one's duty demands with proper self control, and free from attachment or desire for fruit is said to constitute Satvic inner renunciation (Tyag) A wise man who has cut asunder all his doubts, and has acquired unitary vision in the diversity of existence neither gets attached nor enamoured by pleasant actions, nor does he abhor unpleasant actions

Action is a biological necessity, and cannot be avoided so long as a man is alive in his body. It is an obligatory function of life, mind and body An idea of its physical renunciation is a sheer illusion The only remedy to liberate from bondage of action lies in the mental renunciation of its fruit. True inner renunciation or Tyag thus implies performance of all Satvic actions which one's duty demands, but devoid of any attachment to them or a hankering for a fruit in return. Such renunciation loosens the knot of ego and culminates in renouncing all works to the Divine Will

Shri Aurovindo says "the Satvic principle of renunciation is to withdraw not from action, but from the personal

demand, the ego factor behind it It is to do works not dictated by desire, but by the law of right living···On a higher spiritual plane they are dictated by the Will of the Master, and done with the mind in Yoga, without any personal attachment either to the action or to the fruit of the action There must be a complete renunciation of all desire and of all self-regarding egoistic choice and impulse, and finally of that much subtler egoism of the will which either says, "The Work is Mine, I am the doer" or even "The work is God's, but I am the doer.'' There must be no attachment to pleasant, desirable, lucrative or successful work, and no doing of it because it has that nature But that kind of work too has to be done,—done totally, selflessly, with the ascent of the spirit—when it is the action demanded from above and from within us There must be no aversion to unpleasant, undesirable, or ungratifying action or work, that brings or is likely to bring with it suffering, danger, harsh condition and inauspicious consequences. For, that too has to be accepted totally, selflessly, with a deep understand ng of its need and meaning, when it is the work that should be done (Kartavyam Karma) "

It is important to note that desire for fruit is distinguishable from a desire to perform an action. It is not the desire for action, but the desire for fruit of action that has to be renounced But the desire for action must be of Satvic nature developing into spiritual nature. A desire for spiritual uplift and for evolving self-consciousness, and Divine consciousness has not to be renounced in any case

To quote Shri Aurovindo from the Synthesis of Yoga, p 118, 'ordinarily the human being acts because he has a desire or feels a mental, vital, or physical want or need He is driven by the necessities of the body, by the lust of riches, honour or fame, or by a craving for the personal satisfactions of the mind or the heart, or a craving for power or pleasure Or he is seized and pushed about by a moral

need, or at least the need or the desire of making his ideas, or his ideals, or his will, or his party, or his country, or his gods prevail in the world. If none of these desires, nor any other must be the spring of our action, it would seem as if all incentive or motive power had been removed, and action itself must necessarily cease. The Geeta replies with its third great secret of the Divine life. All action must be done in a more and more Godward and finally a God-possessed consciousness. Our works must be a sacrifice to the Divine, and in the end a surrender of all our being, mind, will, heart, sense, life and body to the One, must make God-love and God-service our only motive....In the end not desire, but the consciously felt will of the Eternal remains as the sole driver of our action, and the sole originator of its initiative.

XVIII-7. The Lord says :—Renunciation of rightly regulated actions is not proper. Their abnegation out of Ignorance is a Tamsic renunciation.

XVIII-8. He who abstains from an action because it is difficult and sorrowful, or because it involves a fear of bodily suffering and pain, does not obtain the fruit of renunciation, inspite of his abstinence from Rajsic activity.

XVIII 9. He who performs all actions which his duty demands, with proper self-control, but without any attachment either to the actions or to their fruits, such a mental renunciation of his is Satvic Tyag in My opinion.

XVIII-10. He who neither abhors unpleasant actions, nor attaches himself to pleasant actions, such a renouncer well-established in Satoguna, is wise and freed from all doubts arising out of Ignorance.

XVIII-11. It is not possible for an embodied being to relinquish actions. Therefore, one who has renounced fruits of actions is said to be a true mental renouncer (Tyagi).

A(4)—RENUNCIATION OF FRUIT (TYAG) TRANSFORMS AN EGOISTIC WORKER INTO A DIVINE WORKER.

(XVIII—12 to 17)

When we probe into the psychology of action, we find that it is the nature of the ego and some other factors of Nature that initiate an action and contribute to its good or bad results. The soul indifferently witnesses the activity, and remains quite unconcerned with its success or failure Thus one who has risen over the Nature of his ego, mind, senses and body, is not affected by the pleasant, unpleasant, or mixed results of action But a man enchained to lower nature experiences and suffers by such results The only natural way of liberation from bondages of action thus lies in renunciation of fruit (Tyag), and not in physical withdrawal from the world.

Sankhya philosophy describes five factors of Nature that contribute to final result of action and also to their initiation.

1 The first factor is the nature of the objective or cause (Adhishthan) that prompts a man to under take an action. If the cause is righteous, possibility of success is greater than that in case of a vicious cause The term Adhishthan in verse 12 is also taken to mean physical body of the actor, but body is included in the second factor Karta. Adhishthan can thus be interpreted to imply the sense of the cause for fulfilment of which action is undertaken, and on which it is founded.

2. The second factor is the Karta or the actor Result of an action depends on the nature of the actor, and the wisdom employed by them in execution of the act.

3 The third factor consists of various preparations equipments, and strategies etc necessary to meet the situation, and to face the obstacles likely to arise in execution.

4. The fourth factor is the nature and quantum of physical energy and capacity employed in execution.

5. The fifth factor of Destiny is the most important of all others. As a result of the nature of actions prominent in past life, certain good or bad happenings are fore-doomed for the next life. Shri Aurovindo says, "Fate (Daivam) is the influence of the power or powers other than the human factors, other than the visible mechanism of Nature, that stand behind these and modify the work and dispose its fruits in the steps of act and consequence"

Thus a man has no control over the results of actions, and this being so, it is but reasonable to renounce fruit of action into the scheme and plan of Cosmic activity of Nature (Yagna). It is in fact the nature of ego, mind, senses, and body that regulates the nature of action, and controls their results. The Soul has no hand in the egoistic activity of a man. It is a delusion to believe that it is the Soul that acts, and is responsible for virtuous or vicious actions. A realised person who has crossed over his lower nature of ego, and who lives in Spiritual Consciousness is not affected by the bondage of actions, however, vicious or criminal they might appear to our moral or legal sense. Even the pragmatic law of Crimes recognises intention as the gist of an offence. A divinised person who has renounced the fruit of action, has no trace of such criminal, intent in his mind or intellect while performing an act. He is likely to be treated as a maniac or an idiot, if an evil nature of an act happens to emerge out of his un-intentional conduct. The man of knowledge is not an idiot, though his acts may not accord with established social conventions. His personal sense of being an actor gets replaced by Cosmic Ideation, and his acts are in harmony with the great Cosmic Order propelled by the Divine Will. One, who renounces not only the fruit of action, but also the egoistic sense of being an actor, and who thus becomes a mere instrument of

Divine will, creates no bondage of action even though he performs all actions

The Lord thus concludes that inner renunciation (Tyag) is the only natural way of liberation from the bondage of actions He has advised Arjun not to shrink from war out of attachment for his relations and venerable teachers, arrayed against him with a large army in the battle field. In Chapter II verse 38 he calls upon him to boldly face the enemy, treating pleasure or pain, gain or loss, and success or defeat as equal By such renunciation of the result of action, he will not be bound by the law of karma, even if he were to slay the entire army of his adversary In this chapter the Lord gives a psychological justification for this advice to satisfy the intellectual doubts of Arjun. He thus expressly declares to Arjun in Verse XVII, that one who is free from egoistic sense of being an actor, and whose intellect remains detached from the result of action, does not get bound, even if he slays these people arrayed against him in war, and that he virtually slays them not.

Shri Aurovindo says "The Doer is ordinarily supposed *to be our surface personal ego, but that is the false idea of* the understanding that has not arrived at knowledge. The *ego is the ostensible doer, but the ego and its will are* creations and instruments of Nature with which the ignorant understanding wrongly identifies itself, and they are not the only determinants even of human action, much less of its turn and consequence When we are liberated from ego, our real self behind comes forward, impersonal and universal. It sees (in its self-vision of unity with the universal Spirit), universal Nature, as the doer of the work, and the Divine Will behind as the master of universal Nature .... Once we live in this greater knowledge, the character and consequences of the work can make no difference to the freedom of the spirit The work may be outwardly a terrible action like this great battle and slaughter of Kurukshetra. But although the liberated man

takes part in the struggle and though he slays all these peoples, he slays no man and he is not bound by his work, because the work is that of the Master of the Worlds, and it is He who has already slain in his hidden omnipotent will, all these armies".

XVIII-12. The Lord says :—Pleasant, unpleasant, or mixture of both are the three kinds of fruits of action that cling to one (who has not renounced fruits), during his life time and also on death. But they hardly cling to one who has mentally renounced fruits of action.

XVIII-13. O Mighty-armed, know from me five factors that are said to contribute to the success of all actions according to Sankhya philosophy.

XVIII-14. They are (1) the cause on which action is founded, (2) nature of the actor, (3) various equipments and preparations, (4) quantum of energy and efforts employed in the act, and (5) the fifth factor of destiny.

XVIII-15. These five factors are also the efficient causes that drive a man to initiate all actions of body, speech and mind, whether just or unjust.

XVIII-16. That being so, one who on account of ignorant understanding looks upon the self as the sole doer, he of perverted understanding has not the true vision.

XVIII-17. He who has renounced egoistic idea of being an actor, and whose understanding remains detached from the act, does not get bound. Although he might slay all these peoples, he in fact slays them not.

B (1)—FACTORS THAT INITIATE ACTION AND THOSE THAT ACCOMPLISH IT. (XVIII—18)

Inner renunciation of action (Tyaga) initially starts with resignation of fruit to the Divine Will ; but it culminates in elimination of the egoistic idea of being an actor, and trans-

forms a man into a divine worker. In order to attain this culmination it is necessary to have a comprehensive knowledge of the psychological mechanism that initiates an action and propels it for execution through the physical mechanism of the body. This knowledge when assimilated into one's nature, loosens the knot of ego and transforms an egoistic worker into a Divine Worker.

I. Initiators of Actions

There are three factors that constitute the phychological origin of action as shown below :

(1) Ego, the apparent "I".

It is the nature of the ego that considers itself to be an actor, while the self, the spiritual "I" is not the actor at all. Five senses of knowledge come in contact with the objective existence, and convey their impressions of an object to the mind. The mind communicates the impressions to intellect, and the intellect in turn refers them to the ego with its suggestions for final approval. If the ego decides to approve the objective, it orders the intellect, mind, and the senses of action to execute an act for its achievement. In case the ego rejects the objective there is no urge for action. Thus it is the ego that is the source of desire, and orders its fulfilment through the instruments of the body. Senses, mind and intellect are mere channels through which knowledge of an objective is communicated to the ego. This apparent 'I' ultimately comprehends, cognizes and sanctions initiation of action. It being the ultimate cognizer is spoken of as Parigyata in verse 18, as distinguished from the mental knower (Gyata).

(2) Wisdom (Gyan).

The decision of the ego varies with its inherent qualitative nature. Satvic ego may refuse to approve an act which a Rajsic ego may be keen to approve. The triple nature of the ego varies with the spiritual or worldly wisdom that it

has developed in course of its evolution in numerous past lives. It is this wisdom or Gyan that determines the final decision of the ego to initiate or not to initiate an action. Wisdom is thus the second factor that contributes to the initiation of action. The term Gyan in verse 18 implies the sense of wisdom and not intellectual knowledge, as is clear from the description of the term in verses 20 to 22.

(3) Object of knowledge.

The objective which forms the subject of knowledge communicated to the ego by mind, intellect, and senses, constitutes the third originator of action. If the object has special attraction to the ego, it becomes the main source of desire on which action is founded. If the objective is repugnant to the ego, there is no approval and no initiation of action.

II. Executors of Action

Ego the apparent 'I', wisdom and objective are the chief initiators of action on the psychological level. Actual execution of the act is undertaken by the physical body through physical means. The nature of ego determines the nature of the actor (karta). Nature of wisdom determines various intellectual and physical devices, artifices, strategies and other material preparations to accomplish the act (karmam). Nature of the objective determines the nature of dynamic energy to be employed for its achievement (karma). Thus the three initiators of action execute that action through these three physical agents strictly in conformity with the nature of the former.

XVIII-18. Thus the Lord says :—Wisdom (Gyan), the object of knowledge (Gyeya), and the knower (the apparent I) are the triple initiators of action. Implements of action, dynamic activity, and the mental actor are the triple factors that contribute to the accomplishment of action.

B(2)—WISDOM DETERMINES THE CHARACTER OF ACTION AND OF ITS ACTOR (XVIII—19 to 28)

It has been pointed out that the nature of wisdom developed by the ego in course of its evolution decides initiation of action. It determines the nature of motive power and also the nature of the actor, according to its qualitative nature.

(1) Satvic Wisdom, Satvic Action and Satvic Actor.

Satvic wisdom experiences one Imperishable Spirit pervading diverse multiple becomings, and has a unitary vision in the entire diversity of existence It energises satvic action, which is self-controlled, devoid of personal attachment, relish or hatred, and is not prompted by a desire for fruit. An actor endowed with Satvic wisdom naturally remains free from attachment and egoism, and is impelled to act with satvic resolution and zeal, and is unaffected by success or failure

(2) Rajsic Wisdom, Rajsic Action and Rajsic Actor.

Rajsic wisdom experiences diversity in multiple becomings It impells an action prompted by desire and egoism, and executed by various passionate efforts An actor possessed of rajsic wisdom remains personally attached to action, and is keenly desirous of fruit. He is greedy, impure, violent, brutal in execution of the act, and is moved by joy in success and by grief in failure

(3) Tamsic Wisdom, Tamsic Action and Tamsic Actor.

Tamsic wisdom passionately clings to each object solely for personal gain, is devoid of reason and truth of reality, and is narrow in outlook. It impels an action undertaken from delusion, without regard to capacity, consequences, loss and injury to others. An actor possessed of tamsic

wisdom is irresolute, mechanical, vulgar, obstinate, foolish, indolent, procrastinating, and pessimistic.

Actions that are irresponsible and harmful to the world are thus inhibited for all kinds of actors. In order to develop true renunciation of fruit of action (Tyag), one has to develop Satvic wisdom as a driving force for satvic action to be performed by him as a satvic actor. Satvic wisdom culminates in Divine Wisdom initiating and propelling Divine Action by a Divine Worker. Inner renunciation (Tyag) thus results in entire elimination of ego, and the idea of being an actor at all. Ego self, the apparent 'I' is replaced by the spiritual self, and the aspiring devotee is transformed into a Divine Worker. Beyond this Trigunatmic wisdom, lies true Spiritual Wisdom, which aims at realisation of the Divine as the sole object of knowledge, and aspires to attain a status where one can touch, enter or know by identity the Eternal, Infinite, and Absolute.

Shri Aurovindo says—"At the line of culmination of sattwa, action will be transformed and become a highest impersonal action dictated by the spirit within us and no longer by the intelligence, an action moved by the highest law of nature free from the lower ego and from limitation even by best opinion, noblest desire, purest personal will, or loftiest mental ideal There will be none of these impediments and in their place, there will stand a clear spiritualself-knowledge and illumination and imperative intimate sense of an infallible power that acts, and of the work to be done for the world and for the world's Master".

The Lord describes the nature of these three in-born tendencies that colour the nature of action.

XVIII-19. The Lord says:—Wisdom, action and actor are spoken of by Sankhya as being of three categories based on their qualitative differences in nature. Hear them from me in detail.

(1) Three categories of wisdom

XVIII-20. The wisdom that experiences one imperishable spiritual essence existing in diverse becomings, know it to be satvic wisdom.

XVIII-21. But that wisdom which experiences infinite diversity in multiple existences, know it to be Rajsic wisdom.

XVIII-22. And that wisdom which passionately clings wholly to each action as a routine, devoid of reason and truth of its reality, and is narrow-minded, that is declared to be Tamsic Wisdom.

(2) Three Categories of Action

XVIII-23. An action performed with due self-control as a duty, free from attachment, love or hatred, and not prompted by a desire for fruit, that is called Satvic action.

XVIII-24. An action prompted by egoism and desire for fruit, and executed by various passionate efforts, that is called Rajsic wisdom.

XVIII-25. An action undertaken from dellusion without regard to capacity, consequences, loss or injury to others, that is declared to be Tamsic Action.

(3) Three Categories of Actors

XVIII-26. An actor liberated from personal attachments and egoism, brimming with firm resolution and zeal, and unaffected by success or failure is said to be satvic actor.

XVIII-27. An actor who has eager attachment to his action, who is passionately desirous of fruit, is greedy, violent, brutal, impure, and is moved by joy in success and by grief in failure, such an actor is said to be Rajsic.

XVIII-28: An actor who is irresolute, vulgar, proud, obstinate, foolish, indolent, procrastinating, and pessimistic, such an actor is called Tamsic actor.

B (3)—INTELLECTUAL UNDERSTANDING, TENACITY OF WILL AND RESULTING HAPPINESS (XVIII—29 to 39).

Wisdom is the inherent quality of inborn nature. It is the accumulated development resulting out of experiences of past lives. It shapes the natural tendency of an actor and the character of his action. These are the inborn factors that influence the natural trend of a man's behaviour and activity in life. But external environments of communal, religious, social, political, family and other types in the midst of which a man happens to take birth, mould and colour this inborn trend of nature. Early training and other surroundings mould his will in line with the aspirations of the social, religious, communal or national groups. A man thus sacrifices his inborn individual wisdom and natural urges on the altar of the prevailing thought atmosphere of the social group.

Thus the inborn wisdom and natural urges of a man undergo a change when the time of practical execution of an act arrives. Satvic wisdom is influenced and converted into worldly wisdom under the influence of local environments. This is the reason why we at times notice a highly Satvic religious person indulging in communal, religious or regional fanaticism of a repugnant and ugly type. Satisfaction and happiness to which he aspires colour tenacity of his will, and mould his intellect to devise ways and means to achieve success in his enterprises by means fair or foul. Inborn wisdom and its corresponding natural drive for action do not thus necessarily persist to control and guide his conduct in life, being greatly influenced by external circumstances.

Shri Aurovindo says in Essays of Gita in page 337, that "Life, state, society, family, all surrounding powers seem to be in a league to lay their yoke on our spirit, compel us into their moulds, impose on us their mechanical interest and rough immediate convenience. We become parts of a machine. We are not allowed to be in the true sense, souls, minds, free children of the spirit empowered to develop the highest characteristic perfection of our being, and make it our means of service, to the race. It would seem that we are not what we make ourselves, but what we are made"

When an action descends down from the psychological stage of initiation (Arambh) into the practical field of execution, there are three factors that accelerate and regulate its conduct. They are (1) intellectual reasoning, (2) natural tenacity of will, and (3) nature of the aspired happiness. Demand of external environments mould the nature of these three factors according to their nature.

If inspite of these demands an actor mentains Satvic wisdom, his Buddhi or reasoning intellect and understanding remains Satvic. Satvic understanding rightly discriminates between involutionary and evolutionary nature of an act, between right and wrong step, between actions that are to be avoided and those that are not to be avoided and also between those that create bondage and those that help liberation. This Satvic Buddhi naturally energises Satvic tenacity of will to execute an action to Satvic perfection. Satvic tenacity of will (Dhriti) sustains actions arising out of mind life and senses unadulterated in pursuit ,of Divine Union. Satvic Dhriti results in bringing about Satvic happiness, which appears repulsive like venom in the beginning, but turns out happy and sweet like nectar in the end as a bliss born out of Self-Knowledge.

If the actor's wisdom is Rajsic, his intellectual understanding is also Rajsic, which does not correctly discriminate between virtuous and vicious acts, and between the steps that are to be avoided and those that are to be undertaken

in performance of an action, Rajsic Buddhi energises Rajsic tenacity of will (Dhriti), that holds a man fast to duties, desires, and objectives with extreme personal attachment and desire for fruit. Rajsic will (Dhriti) employed in execution of an act brings about happiness that appears sweet like nectar in the beginning, being the result of contact of senses with sense-objects, but which turns out painful like poison in the end.

If the actor's wisdom is Tamsic, his intellectual understanding is equally Tamsic, which considers wrong action as right, and takes a perverted view of all objectives Tamsic understanding (Buddhi) energises Tamsic tenacity of will in execution of the act. Tamsic tenacity of will (Dhriti) does not permit a man of perverted understanding to get over imaginary dreams, fear; grief, despair and vanity. It brings about happiness which is delusive of the self both in the beginning and in the end and is the outcome of sleep, indolence and heedlessness.

The Lord now briefly describes the triple nature of these executive factors of action.

(1) Triple nature of intellectual understanding

XVIII-29. The Lord says : O Dhananjaya, now hear from me in detail the three qualitative divisions of intellectual understanding (Buddhi), and of tenacity of will (Dhriti) employed in performance of action.

XVIII-30. Satvic understanding knows how to discriminate between evolutionary and involutionary nature of an act, between proper and improper action, between steps that are dangerous or free from fear, and between acts that bind and those that liberate from the law of action.

XVIII-31. That understanding is Rajsic by which a man does not discriminate between virtuous or vicious acts, and between actions that ought to be done and those that ought not to be done.

XVIII-32. The understanding enveloped by Tamogun accepts wrong action as right, and takes a perverted view of all objectives. O Parth, such understanding is Tamsic.

A Rajsic and Tamsic person is usually shrewd, cunning and worldly-wise intellectually. A Satvic person uses his intellect for spiritual uplift by indulging in actions that are altruistic, humanitarian, religious and unegoistic with proper self-control and personal sacrifice. The Satvic Buddhi in course of time exceeds it-self, and becomes a channel of Spiritual Wisdom (Pra-gya), of which it is a rarified reflection in human beings.

(2) Triple nature of tenacity of will (dhriti)

XVIII-33. The tenacity of will that sustains all actions arising out of mind, life, and senses unadulterated in pursuit of Divine Union is Satvic.

XVIII-34. The tenacity of will that holds fast a man desirous of fruit, to his duty, desires and objectives by personal attachments is Rajsic.

XVIII-35. That tenacity of will that does not permit a man of perverted understanding to get over fictitous dreams, fear, grief, despair, and vanity, is Tamsic.

Satvic will is evolutionary, while Rajsic and Tamsic will are the chief sources of bondage. Shri Aurovindo says, "The Rajsic will fixes its persistent attention on the satisfaction of its own attached clingings and desires, in its pursuit of interest and pleasure, and of what it thinks or chooses to think right and just. Always it is apt to put on these things the construction which will most flatter and justify its desires, and to uphold as right or legitimate the means, which will best help it to get the coveted fruits of its work and endeavour.

(3) Triple nature of coveted happiness

XVIII-36.. The Lord says :—O Bhartarshab, now hear from Me three kinds of coveted happiness, and also that happiness by dwelling in which one by practice arrives at the end of all sorrows.

XVIII-37. The happiness that is experienced painful like poison in the beginning, but which turns out sweet like nectar in the end is said to be Satvic, as it is the outcome of the bliss of Self-knowledge

XVIII-38. The happiness that is experienced sweet like nectar in the beginning, being the result of contacts of senses with sense-objects, but which turns out painful like poison in the end, is said to be Rajsic.

XVIII-39. The happiness that deludes and binds the self both in the beginning and in the end, and is the outcome of sloth, indolence and heedless-ness, is said to be Tamsic.

Descent of spiritual bliss in the mind as a result of evolutionary ascent into higher levels of mind and super-mind is Satvic happiness. Wordly happiness resulting from satisfaction of desires is Rajsic. Happiness derived from ruthless heedless-ness or from sloth, stupor, indolence etc. is Tamsic.

Shri Aurovindo says, "happiness is indeed the one thing which is openly or indirectly the universal pursuit of our human nature. ...Pain is an experience our nature has to accept when it must, involuntarily as a necessity, an unavoidable incident of universal Nature, or voluntarily as a means to what we seek after, but not a thing desired for its own sake···But there are various kinds of happiness or pleasure according to the Gunas which dominate in our nature. Thus the Tamsic mind can remain well-pleased in its indolence and inertia, its stupor and sleep, its

blindness and its error. The mind of the Rajsic man drinks of a more fiery and intoxicating cup. The keen, mobile active pleasure of the senses and the body, and the sense-entangled or fiercily kinetic will and intelligence are to him all the joy of life and the very significance of living. What the Satvic nature seeks is the satisfaction of the higher mind and the spirit, and when it once gets this large object of its quest, there comes in a clear pure happiness of the soul, a state of fullness, an abiding ease and peace. This happiness does not depend on outward things, but on our-selves alone, and on the flowering of what is best and most inward within us But it is not at first our normal possession ; it has to be conquered by self-discipline, a labour of the soul, a high and arduous endeavour. At first this means much loss of habitual pleasure, much suffering and struggle, a poison born of the churning of our nature, a painful conflict of forces, much revolt and opposition to the change due to the ill-will of the members or the insistence of vital movement. But in the end the nectar of immortality rises in the place of this bitterness, and as we climb to the higher spiritual nature we come to the end of sorrow, the euthanasia of grief and pain. That is the surpassing happiness which descends upon us at the point or line of culmination of the Satvic discipline." (Essays on Gita).

C (1)—FOUR CATEGORIES OF HUMAN NATURE

(XVIII—40 to 44)

It has been stated above that every man is born with a certain type of natural wisdom, as a result of the accumulated experiences of past lives. But since all the three Gunas work in human constitution simultaneously as a complex mixture no man can be said to possess pure Satvic wisdom, or pure Rajsic or Tamsic wisdom. Proportion of Gunas is always in a fluidy condition, with the result that

the same man may at times act with highly Satvic wisdom, and at times with highly Rajsic or Tamsic worldly wisdom. Actions performed in Satvic mood are evolutionary, while those performed in a Rajsic or Tamsic mood are involutionary, operating as great set-backs to evolutionary progress. Thus a man accumulates some evolutionary and some involutionary factors at the end of his life. This resultant mixture constitutes his inner being or Swabhao for the next birth. This impression of the confused mixture of past actions remains submerged in sub-conscious mind and binds him tightly to past, and emerges out as a natural trend of action. This binding force of inner being is described as Dhriti, or tenacity of will born with a man as a result of past actions.

The natural wisdom works as the inner voice of a man while deciding to initiate or not to initiate, an action. At the stage of active execution of action, social, family, national or religious environments mould this intellect, will and the aspired happiness, in consonance with their nature, and thus thwart the dictates of his inner voice. Law of Karma has retrospective and prospective effects. Retrospective effect binds a man to past associations of thought and actions. It traces continuity with the past, and its resultant is the nature of inner being born with an individual, propelling a corresponding tenacity of will (Dhriti). Prospective aspect is the creative freedom of self, and is born as wisdom But it does not come in free play, so long as an individual acts solely under the impulse of lower nature. It is only when a man can act by subordinating his lower nature to the pure urge of the self, that his actions can be said to be free actions. Thus man is influenced by the environments, and unless he learns to live in Divine environments to the exclusion of vital or mental, he cannot make his in-born Satvic wisdom the sole guiding factor of his activities in life.

On the basis of diverse nature of the inner beings (Swabhao), of individuals, humanity is classified in four categories by ancient sages on a close scrutiny and inner vision of human psychology. Nature of the inner being or *the astral body determines natural trend of action.* Actions emerging out of the natural being of an individual (Swabhao-Jam Karma) differ from man to man. They are made the basis of classification of humanity in four categories *in order to judge evolutionary stage of an individual.*

(1) **Brahmin action**—Actions emerging out of the inner being as predominantly Sato-Rajsic are specified as actions of a Brahmin. Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity of mind and body, forgiveness, candour, wisdom, knowledge, belief in God are the inherent trends of action of a Brahmin born of his inner being.

(2) **Kshatriya action**—*Actions emerging out naturally* out of the inner being as predominantly Rajo-Satvic are specified as Kshatriya actions. Heroism, might, firm resolution, dexterity, non-shrinking from fighting out a righteous cause, generosity, leadership are the inherent natural trends of Kshatra Karma born of inner being.

(3) **Vaishya action.**—Actions emerging naturally out of the inner being as predominantly Rajo-Tamsic are specified as Vaishya Karma. Agriculture, cow breeding and protection, industry and mutual commerce are the inherent trends of a Vaishya action, born out of inner being.

(4) **Shudra action.**—Actions emerging naturally out of the inner being as predominantly Tamo-Rajsic are specified as Shudra actions Tendency of servitude and dependence for want of self confidence is the inherent trend of Shudra action.

The Lord speaks of these four divisions of humanity based on the inner dynamic trend of the nature of an individual's swabhao.

XVIII-40. The Lord says :—There is no existing entity either on the earth or in heaven or among the gods, that is not subject to the workings of these three Nature-born Gunas.

XVIII-41. O Parantap, actions of Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra are separately classified on the basis of inborn qualities of the inner being of an individual.

XVIII-42. Mental and sense control, austerity, purity, forgiveness, candour, knowledge, Divine wisdom, belief in God are the natural trends of Brahmin action generated out of the inner being of an individual.

XVIII-43. Bravery, might, firm resolution, dexterity, non-shrinking from facing a righteous war, generosity, leadership are the natural trends of Kshatriya actions, naturally emerging out of the inner being.

XVIII-44. Agriculture, animal-husbandry, and commerce are the natural trends of Vaishya action, naturally emerging out of the inner being. Actions of the nature of service naturally arising out of the inner being are the Shudra actions.

C (2)—SWABHAO, SWADHARMA, SWAKARMA AND THEIR CULMINATION. (XVIII—45 to 49)

Human constitution comprises of not only the physical body but also of the subtle mental body and desire body, commonly known as Sukshma Sharir. These subtle bodies are store-houses of the impressions of natural trends of actions of past lives. Man is a mental being, and is gifted with intellect to discriminate between right and wrong. Evolution towards higher levels of mind and super-mind is the natural urge of Satvic intelligence. Actions of religious, altruistic, moral or spiritual nature leave evolutionary imprints on the subtle mental being, which emerge as

natural proclivities of Satvic nature. Actions prompted by desires and self-interest leave an imprint of involutionary character on the lower mental and desire bodies, which emerge out as natural trends of Rajsic and Tamsic nature. Natural tendencies of this subtle inner being colour the nature of all actions executed through the physical body. They become the dominating governing principles or the sole law of action. This law of action is called Swadharma, which keeps a man bound to the natural trend of Swabhao. This subtle inner being of a man is known as Swabhao (Swa=one's own, Bhao=inner being). Concrete actions emerging out of one's Swabhao and Swadharma are his Swakarmas.

Swa-dharma shapes the character of (swakarma) actions of an individual. Swa-karmas of humanity are classified in four categories based on the proportion of Gunas predominant in the nature of an individual's inner being (Swa-bhao). But no man is purely Swatvic or purely Rajsic or Tamsic. There is always a complex mixture of all the three Gunas in different proportions in the inner beings of all men. Therefore, every man has partial tendencies of Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra Karmas, with one of them dominating his nature. It is note-worthy that the Geeta speaks of four divisions of humanity on the basis of predominant natural aptitude and impulses, and does not refer to specific actions prescribed for each class. Since each class has a mixture of the qualitative nature of all the four classes in different proportions, it becomes possible for a Kshatriya, Vaishya or Shudra to develop the Satvic nature of a Brahmin, as well as Divine nature.

Swabhao & Swadharma are not parental heritages.

These impulses of nature are the outcome of our own tendencies and actions of past lives. They are heritages of our own past births, and not necessarily parental heritages. Physical body is entirely the creation of parental heritage, but the subtle inner body is entirely the creation of one's

own heritage of past lives. Thus the son of Brahmin may not necessarily be of a Brahmin temperament. In olden days learned seers and sages used to denominate a child as Brahmin, Kshatriya, or Vaishya after a close scrutiny of his inborn nature. This was celebrated as 'Dwij-Sanskar' or the ritual of second birth allotted by the Guru to the child for choosing the type of education and professional efficiency suitable to his nature. Parental heritage did not always determine his profession and conduct in life. It is true that the soul of a particular nature on death is usually attracted for birth in the family of a similar temperament, but exceptions to this law are noticed in the births of some Great men and renowned saints. The father or the son of Shakespeare werenot endowed with Shakesperian intelligence. No doubt some qualities of parents, of early training, of society and other environments are imbibed by the child, but still it is the nature of his own inner being that usually dominates the trend of his actions.

I may quote what Shri Aurovindo says on these points. "These verses (41 to 44) and the earlier pronouncement of the Gita on the same subject have been seized upon in current controversies on the caste questions, and interpreted by some as a sanction of the present system, and by others as a denial of the heriditary basis of caste. In point of fact the verses in the Gita have no bearing on the existing caste system, because that is a very different thing from the ancient social ideal of Chaturvarna, the four clear cut orders of the Aryan community, and in no way corr-espond with the description of the Gita. If we take the religious side of the contention advanced by the advocates of caste system, we can fasten no such absurd idea on the words of the Gita. It does not say that a law of man's nature is that he shall follow, without regard to his personal bent and capacities, the profession of his parents: the son of a milkman to be a milkman, the son of a doctor, a doctor, the son of a shoemaker to remain a shoemaker to the end of immeasurable time."

"Gita founds its thought on the inner significance. It speaks in one word of the work born with a man (Sahajam·karma). But this does not in it-self imply a hereditary basis. According to the Indian theory of rebirth, a man's inborn nature and course of life are essentially determined by his own past lives They are the self-development already effected by his past actions, mental and spiritual evolution, and cannot depend solely on the material factor of his ancestry, parentage, physical birth, which can be of subordinate moment, one effective sign perhaps, but not the dominant principle. The word 'Sahaj' means that which is born with us, whatever is natural, inborn, innate. Its equivalent in all other passages is 'Swabhao-jam.' The work or function of a man is determined by his qualities; Karma is determined by Gunas. It (Sahaj Karma) is the work born of his Swabhao (Swabhaojam Karma), and regulated by his swabhao (Swabhao-Niyatam Karma). This emphasis on the inner quality and spirit, which finds expression in work, function and action, is the whole sense of Gita's idea of Karma. And from this emphasis on the inner truth, and not on the outer form (caste) arises the spiritual significance and power which the Gita assigns to the following of the Swadharma."

Swadharma and Sahaj Karma (Swa-Karma)
Culminate in Naish-Karma Siddhi

Naish-karma Siddhi is a spiritual status in which actions create no bondage, because their egoistic nature is transformed into spiritual nature. If a man is hide-bound by his inborn nature (Swabhao) and by the law of action that emerges out of it (Swadharma), and if he is called upon to follow the same Swadharma throughout his life, what remedy is there for him to uplift his Trigunatmic Swadharma into spiritual nature in order to attain Naish-karma perfection. If there is no remedy then all doors

for further evolution are tightly closed for him till eternity. Geeta very emphatically stresses upon a man to act according to his own Swadharma, and not to immitate the Swadharma of another, even though his own Swadharma may not appear on the face of it as honourable as that of another. There is a deep spiritual significance behind this dictum. Nature of each individual is constituted of all the three Gunas though only one of them dominates his actions. Four divisions of human action (Swa-karma) are based on the Trigunatmic nature of the inner being (Swabhao). Every individual possesses subtle tendencies of the Swadharma of all the four divisions, though only one of them usually remains prominent in his behaviour.

None of these Swadharmas is superior or inferior to others if rightly exercised. A Brahmin undertakes development of the spiritual aspect of the human soul. He trains humanity to develop Satvic behaviour by personal example. He acts with mental and sense control, and teaches how to live with austerity, purity, forgiveness and candour. He imparts moral, social and spiritual knowledge, and leads a man on Divine path. His work is dedicated to effect mental and spiritual advancement of humanity.

A Kshatriya develops another aspect of human uplift. He imposes social stability, ensures a free and fearless living by bravely subduing anti-social elements, tyrants, criminals, and other disturbing factors of a happy and peaceful society. He acts as a guardian of his subjects to afford them a free scope to develop all aspects of their inner nature with full freedom.

A Vaishya develops the third aspect of humanity of mutual intercourse and cooperation in order to promote weal and convenience to the society. He engages himself in trade, agriculture and animal-husbandry in order to make available to the people all necessaries of life with a reasonable profit for his labour. He thus contributes to the happiness of soceity by his actions.

A Shudra contributes to the happiness of the society by personal service. Such service has a spiritual value if rendered in the spirit of co-operating and helping men in the promotion of avocations of all classes. Service rendered to the poor, invalids and to the suffering humanity is practically the service of God dwelling in the hearts of all. From spiritual point of view such unselfish service of a Shudra is superior to the works of other three classes of human beings.

All these Swadharmas are to be followed with mental renunciations (Tyag), free from any expectation of fruit and personal attachment and as a Divine service. They can thus all be transformed from Trigunatmic nature into spiritual nature, and do not then create any bondage of the law of Karma. The Geeta thus emphasises that none of these four Swadharmas is inferior or superior to others. It has thus been advised that actions issuing out of any Swadharma, if dedicated to the Divine free from attachment and desire of fruit, and if performed as a Divine work to carry out the Divine will, result in the release from the Law of Karma, and ultimately in Divine union. A man can thus safely march on the Divine Path by following his own Swadharma in a right way, and it is not at all necessary to immitate an alien Swadharma however attractive or honourable it may appear on the surface. Every Swadharma, if not followed in the right way, remains shrouded by some defect or other like smoke enveloping fire. Trigunatmic Swabhao and Swadharma thus culminate in Divine Swabhao and Divine Swadharma, naturally flowing out of our soul and not from ego. This Divine Dharma is the true Swadharma of our soul, which leads to spiritual perfection.

Shri Aurovindo says :—"There is always in human nature something of all these four personalities (Chatur-varna) developed or undeveloped, wide or narrow, suppressed or rising to the surface, but in most men one or the other tends to predominate and seems to take up some-times the

whole space of action in the nature·····The fundamental truth is not this out-ward thing, but a force of our inner being in movement, the truth of the four-fold active power of the spiritual nature. Each Jiva possesses in his spiritual nature these four sides is a soul of knowledge, a soul of strength and of power, a soul of mutuality and interchange, a soul of works and service, but one side or other predominates in the action, and expressive spirit, and tinges the dealings of the soul with its embodied nature. It leads and gives its stamp to the other powers and uses them for the principle strain of action, tendency, and experience. The Swabhao then follows not crudely and rigidly as put in the social demarcation, but subtly and flexibly the law of the strain, and develops in developing it the other three powers. Thus the pursuit of the impulse of works and service rightly done develops knowledge, increases power, trains closeness or balance of mutuality and skill and order of relation. Each front of the four-fold god-head moves through the enlargement of its own dominant principle of nature and enrichment by the other three towards a total perfection·····To arrive at the Satvic way of the inner individual Swadharma and of the works which moves us on the ways of life is a preliminary condition of perfection. And it may be noted that the inner Swadharma is not bound to any outward social or other form of action, occupation, or function. The soul of works that is satisfied to serve can make the life of the pursuit of knowledge, the life of struggle and power, or the life of a mutuality, production and interchange, a means of satisfying its Divine impulse to labour and to service."

"And in the end to arrive at the Divinest figure and most dynamic soul-power of this four-fold activity is a wide door-way to swiftest and largest reality of the most high spiritual perfection. This we can do if we turn the action of the Swadharma into a worship of the inner Godhead, the Universal spirit, the transcendent Purushottama, and eventually surrender the whole action into his hands

Then as we get beyond the limitation of the three Gunas, so also we get beyond the division of the four-fold law and beyond the limitation of all distinctive Dharmas (Sarvadharman Parityajya). The Spirit takes up the individual into the universal Swabhao, perfects and unifies the four-fold soul of nature in us, and does its self-determined works according to the Divine will, and the accomplished power of the God-head in the creature."

The initial difficulty which every aspirant experiences for marching on the Divine Path is simplified by the method of mental renunciation in the performance of actions according to his nature. A man of any stage of evolution can while leading a normal active life according to his inborn Swadharma, attains Naish-Karma perfection in which no bondage of action is created even though he does not withdraw from the world. The method of physical withdrawal from the world by artificially and ruthlessly crushing the instinct of possession by parting with all that one possesses including family, society, and even means of subsistence, does not appeal to an average man. He is not prepared to take any risk by such a drastic revolution in life. The result is that hardly one in thousands may truly adopt this course. We may find several pseudo Sanyasies retaining worldly temperament of high, low, love, hatred, honour, dishonour and thereby creating a world of their own in semi-commercial orange coloured garb.

The method of mental renunciation suits a man of any temperament to begin with, because it does not involve an immediate forcible repression of his nature. It needs only a change of values and angle of vision towards the world. By persistent practice of surrendering actions and their results to the Divine, lower nature is gradually tamed, and converted into spiritual nature without any unwelcome undue strain. Mental renunciation thus transforms our Trigunatmic Swabhao and Swadharma into spiritual Swadharma of ourself.

Most of the pseudo Sanyasies continue to remain subject to lower nature even after ostensible physical withdrawal, because they had no preliminary training of mental renunciation and had not got rid of cravings of desires and their fruits. Staunch advocates of physical withdrawal (Sanyas) emphatically affirm Sanyas as the sole indispensable means of spiritual uplift. They charge mental renouncers of misleading the masses by quoting a solitary example of Janak. It is surprising how they ignore the specific teaching of Geeta which strongly affirms that mental renunciation is definitely superior to physical renunciation, and is the safest way to get over the law of Causation. Apart from Janak, we have the examples of Lord Krishna and Shri Ram, who though Divine Avtars were truly men of action with mental renunciation as their motto. We may pay lip-service and admire the theory of Sanyas and the doctrine of illusive Maya, but how many of such admirers have ever dreamt of bringing this theory in practice by taking recourse to Sanyas. By a mental grasp of this theory a man does nothing more than mentally renouncing his attachment to the world without physically withdrawing from it. Practice of Sanyas may suit the nature of one in thousands, but it is practically unsuitable to an average man.

The Lord thus proceeds to point out the method by which one should start practice of mental renunciation (Tyag), while leading a normal active life without any physical coercion and repression of nature.

XVIII-45. The Lord says :—A man attains perfection by acting according to his inborn nature. Hear from Me the method by which perfection is attained by one even while continuing to indulge in actions springing out of his inner being.

XVIII-46. He who is the source of all dynamism in created beings, and by whom the entire existence is pervaded by worshipping Him through our natural actions, a man attains perfection

XVIII-47. Better is one's own Swadharma even though apparently destitute of merit than an alien Swadharma appearing more honourable in execution. One incurs no sin if he performs actions regulated by his inner being.

XVIII-48 O Kaunteya, inborn actions should not be abandoned even though defective, because the initiation of all under-takings is shrouded by some defects like fire by smoke.

XVIII-49. A man whose understanding has no personal attachment to any thing, who has conquered his lower self, and who has exercised all cravings of desire, attains a state of perfect liberation from bondage of action by such true renunciation.

C (3)—ATTAINMENT OF BRAHMAN CONSCIOUSNESS (XVIII—50 to 53)

After attainment of Naish-karma perfection, the next step for an aspirant is to transform his personal individuality into Impersonal cosmic individuality. An individual is a microcosm of the Cosmic Personal as well as Cosmic Impersonal Divine, and thus possesses an inherent potentiality of realising both aspects of Brahman. Personal respect of Brahman is the embodied Kshar Purush, the Lord of the dynamic Nature creating, preserving and destroying the multiple creation. Impersonal aspect of the Brahman (Akshar) is a peaceful and harmonious static condition, which is the base of the dynamic Kshar existence. Both these aspects represent static and dynamic conditions of one and the same Brahman in two poses.

Individual soul (Jiva) being a microcosm of Brahman has inherent potentiality of both these aspects. When the Jiva throws and identifies itself with the active aspect, it assumes mutable personality ; and when it gathers back into the pure silent aspect of itself, it becomes immutable

Impersonality of Nirvan status. Mutable personality has ego at its back. When the ego is dissolved by mental renunciation, there is the conquest of this ego personality and consequent liberation from bondage of action.

Next step is to transform individual personality in Cosmic Impersonality, in which separative vision of diversity is gradually replaced by the unitary vision of the pervasion of the Cosmic Self in diverse created beings. The aspirant begins to visualise all selves as his own self, and later on all selves as part and parcel of the Cosmic Impersonal Self. This fusion of individual personality in the Cosmic Impersonality (Akshar) brings about peace and silence of Static Brahman Consciousness.

Since Brahman is both static and dynamic realisation of both aspects is indispensable for complete Brahman realisation. One who withdraws physically from the world and its works attains partial realisation of only the static Brahman aspect, because he discards the dynamic aspect as Maya, a trickery of Nature. Mental renunciation aims at the integral realisation of both aspects and thus makes it possible for a man to experience perfect peace, joy and universal love even while living and acting in the world. This is the highest attainment of Gyan.

Shri Aurovindo says :—"Brahman indeed is both for the Upanishads and the Gita, all that is and lives and moves. It is not solely an Impersonal Infinite, or an unthinkable and incommunicable Absolute. All this is Brahman, says the Upanishad, all this is Vasudeva says the Gita —the Supreme Brahman is all that moves or is stable, and his hands, feet, eyes, heads, and faces are on every side of us. But still there are two aspects of this All,—his immutable eternal Self that supports existence and his self of active power that moves abroad in the world movement. It is only when we lose our limited ego personality in the Impersonality of the Self that we arrive at the calm and free one-ness by which we can possess a true unity with the universal power

of the Divine in his world movement. Impersonality is a denial of limitation and division, and the cult of impersonality is a *natural condition of true being,* an *indispensable* preliminary of true knowledge, and therefore, a first requisite of true action. It is very clear that we cannot become one self with all or one with the universal Spirit, and His vast self-knowledge, His complex will and His wide spread world-purpose by insisting on our limited personality of ego For that (ego) *divides us* from others, and it makes us bound and self-centred in our view and in our will to action. Imprisoned in personality we can only get a limited union by sympathy or by some relative accommodation of ourselves to the view-point and feeling and will of others To be one with all and with the Divine and His will in the cosmos, we must become at first impersonal and free from our ego and its claims, and from the ego's way of seeing ourselves and the world and others. And we cannot do this if there is not some thing in our *being other than the personality, other than the ego, an* impersonal self one with all existence. To lose ego and be this impersonal self, to become this impersonal Brahman in our consciousness is therefore the first movement of this yoga."

"A continual resort to meditation (Dhyana-Yogaparo Nityam) is the firm means by which the soul of man can realise its self of power and its self of silence. And there must be no *abandonment of the active life for a life of pure* meditation. Action must always be done as a sacrifice to the Supreme Spirit. The movement of recoil in the path of Sanyas prepares an absorbed disappearance of the individual in the Eternal, and *renunciation of action and life in the* world is an indispensable step in the process. But in the Gita's path of Tyag, it is a preparation rather for the turning of our whole life and existence, and of all action *into an integral one-ness with the serene and immeasurable* being, consciousness and will of the Divine. It preludes

and makes possible a vast and total passing upward of the soul out of the lower ego to the inexpressible perfection of the Supreme spiritual Nature (para prakriti)"

The Lord now proceeds to point out the various qualities that an aspirant has to perfect in order to enable himself to achieve Brahman Status by transformation of his dynamic personality into Spiritual Impersonality.

XVIII-50. The Lord says :—O Kaunteya, learn from Me in brief how one after attaining Naish karma perfection, achieves Brahman Status, the supreme goal of Knowledge (Gyan).

XVIII-51-53. One becomes eligible to become one with Brahman after he

(1) has united himself with purified Pragya Buddhi,
(2) has controlled his lower self with steady will,
(3) has detached himself from sense objects like sound etc.
(4) has risen over likes and dislikes,
(5) has resorted to solitude, and abstemiousness,
(6) has control over his body, mind, and speech,
(7) has resorted to constant meditation for Divine union.
(8) has completely given up desire and attachment,
(9) has released himself from egoism, might, arrogance, desire, wrath, possessive-instinct, and personal attachment, and
(10) has attained calm and peace.

C (4)—ATTAINMENT OF SUPREME DIVINE STATUS (XVIII—54 & 55)

After attainment of the corsciousness of Active and Passive Brahman, the devotee has to ascend to the highest realisation of the Supreme Consciousness of Purushottam by development of absorbing love and devotion. By transformation of ego-consciousness into Brahman consciousness he begins to experience not only a deep absorption in perfect Peace and Silence of Nirguna-Brahman, but also intense love, joy and knowledge in the ecstatic play of the Sagun Divine in the world existence. He finds highest satisfaction in participating in the blissful play and dance of his beloved Lord in the multiple exixtence. He aspires for his continual personal presence before his Lord, and seeks Salokya and Samipya liberation. Devotees of Nirguna Brahman exclusively aspire to become one with His Static silence and Peace and calm. Supreme devotees are those who aspire for Sayujya liberation by attainment of union with the Supreme Purushottam in spiritual essence. They can enjoy Divine presence and bliss in the play of their beloved Lord in this dynamic existence, and take part in it as a Divine actor, in the background of Static Peace of Nirvan, even while *living and acting in the world. This is a union in spiritual* essence by identity with the Transcendent Supreme Purushottam.

On attainment of Brahman consciousness the devotee is infused with Divine Bliss, is released from all desire-driven thoughts, acquires unitary vision in the diversity of multiple creation, and thereby attains Supreme Love and devotion to the Divine dwelling in the hearts of all creatures. He thus becomes truly cognisant of the Divine pervasion not only in His unmanifest Nirguna aspect but also in His manifest dynamic Sagun aspect. He thus realises the Supreme Divine integrally, and knows His splendour and magnificient pervasion in the universe in true spiritual essence. He

thereby intrinsically enters into and experiences spiritual identity with the Supreme. Inspite of such entry into the Divine essence the Jiva maintains his entity, and enjoys Divine bliss and consciousness even while living in this world as a Jivan Mukta. Jiva being an eternal portion of Divine (Sanatan Ansh), is not dissolved or annihilated by such Supreme realisation.

Shri Aurovindo says :—"When the soul has lost its separative personality, when it has become the Brahman, it is then that it can live in the true person and can attain to the supreme revealing Bhakti for the Purushottam, and can come to know Him utterly by the power of its profound Bhakti, its heart's knowledge. In the narrow path of knowledge, Bhakti (devotion) to the personal God-Head can be only an inferior and preliminary movement. The end, the climax is the disappearance of personality in a featureless oneness with the Impersonal Brahman, in which there can be no place for Bhakti, for there is none to be adored and none to adore. All else is lost in the silent immobile identity of the Jiva with the Atma. Here there is given to us something yet higher than the Impersonal. Here there is the Supreme Self who is the supreme Ishwara, here there is the Supreme soul and its Supreme Nature, here there is the Purushottama who is beyond the Personal and Impersonal, and reconciles them on his eternal heights. The ego personality still disappears in the silence of the Impersonal, but at the same time there remains even with this silence at the back the action of a Supreme Self, one greater than the Impersonal. There is no longer the lower blind and limping action of the ego and the three Gunas, but instead the vast self-determining movement of an infinite Spiritual Force, a free immeasurable Shakti. All nature becomes the power of the one Divine, and all action His action through the individual as channel and instrument. In place of the ego there comes forward conscious and manifest true spiritual individual in the freedom of His real nature, in the power of

His Supernal status, in the majesty and splendour of His eternal kinship to the Divine, an imperishable portion of the Supreme God-Head, an indestructible power of the Supreme Prakriti."

XVIII-54. The Lord thus says :—One who has become Brahman conscious and is suffused with Divine Bliss, neither grieves nor desires, and possessing a unitary vision in all multiple creatures attains my supreme love and devotion.

XVIII-55. By supreme devotion he comes to know as to who I am, and how I exist in essential reality and principles and My being. Having thus known Me in essence he enters into That supreme consciousness.

D(1)—PROCESS OF DIVINE ATTAINMENT RECAPITULATED (XVIII—56 & 57)

It has been pointed out that mental renunciation is preferable to physical renunciation for attainment of Naish-Karma perfection, which in course of time leads to Brahman consciousness, and culminates in Spiritual union with the Supreme by intense love and devotion. Geeta proceeds step by step in pointing out the practical method for this attainment. It insists on realisation of not only static Peace, Calm, or some void status of Akshar Brahman, but also on the realisation of unity in diversity of the dynamic Kshar existence. It does not advocate withdrawal from the world, treating it as nature's deceptive device to obstruct man's evolution.

First of all the aspirant is advised to act according to his in-born nature, but free from any desire for fruit. It is the desire for fruit that impels a man to under-take all sorts of good and evil actions. If one succeds in detaching himself from the result of his act, there remains no incentive for him to resort to evil acts, and gradually his lower nature undergoes a change for the better.

Next he has to realise that it is the Cosmic Nature that propels all dynamism in the universe as well as in the individual, to carry out a cosmic Divine plan. Man is a mere mechanical tool of Nature to execute the Divine Will. For want of knowledge of this esoteric law of cosmic dynamism, his ego appropriates all his activities to himself as something foreign and independent of the cosmic law of action (Yagna). Initiation of action and its resultant fruit are virtually controlled by this cosmic law, and he must therefore, realise that it is virtually the cosmic nature that works through his body to carry out the Divine Will. To withdraw from the world and its action by a Sanyasi directly contravenes the cosmic law of nature of which he is a creature, and amounts to dissociation from the cosmic chain of action (Yagna) of which he is one link.

Next step is to eliminate the idea of being an actor at all by resigning action itself to the Divine, and to become instrument of Divine action. The egoistic will of the aspirant thus gradually dissolves or rather universalises itself, and is replaced by the Divine Will. His intellectual worldly wisdom is replaced by spiritual wisdom, and the Divine Grace descends upon him to lift him up into the transcendent consciousness of the Supreme. The result is the constant remembrance of Divine, and integral surrender to His Will in all dealings in life and thereafter.

Shri Aurovindo says :—"This liberating action is of the character of works done in a profound union of the will and all the dynamic parts of our nature, with the Divine in our self and the Cosmos. It is done first as a sacrifice with the idea still of our self as the doer. It is done next without that idea and with the perception of the Prakriti as the sole doer. It is done last with the knowledge of that Prakriti as the Supreme power of Divine, and a renunciation, a surrender of all our actions to Him with the individual as a channel only and an instrument. Our works then proceed

straight from the Self and Divine within us, are a part of the indivisible universal action, are initiated and performed not by us but by a vast transcendent Shakti. All that we do is done for the sake of the Lord seated in the heart of all, for the God-Head in the individual and for the fulfilment of His will in us, for the sake of the Divine in the world, for the good of all beings, for the fulfilment of the world action and the world-purpose, or in one word for the sake of the Purushottama and done really by Him through His universal Shakti. These Divine works whatever their form or out-ward character can not bind, but are rather a potent means for rising out of this lower Prakriti of the three Gunas to the perfection of the Supreme Divine and spiritual nature. Disengaged from these mixed and limited Dharmas we escape into the immortal Dharma, which comes upon us when we make ourselves one in all our consciousness and action with the Purushottama."

The Lord thus emphasises *that in order to attain* spiritual perfection, a man must mentally resign all actions to Him must surrender his entire being to Him treating it as a mere instrument of Divine action, and must transform his worldly intellectual wisdom into divine wisdom (Buddhi yoga) to guide his conduct in life.

XVIII-56. The Lord says :—One who has surrendered to Me attains the imperishable eternal status by My Grace even while constantly performing all actions.

XVIII-57. Therefore, mentally renounce all actions to Me, resign yourself to Me, take resort to Divine Wisdom and remain constantly absorbed in My thought.

Shri Aurovindo says :—"The words (in the above verses) express the most complete, intimate and living relation possible between God and man……This stress of feeling is in entire consonance with the high and enduring place that the *Gita* assigns to Bhakti, as *the inmost spirit and motive of*

the Supreme action and the crown and core of the Supreme knowledge. The phrases used and the spiritual emotion with which they vibrate seem to give the most intense prominence possible, and an utmost importance to the personal truth and presence of the God-Head. It is no abstract Absolute of the philosopher, no indifferent impersonal Presence, or ineffable Silence intolerant of all relations, to whom this complete surrender of all our works can be made, and this closeness and intimacy of oneness with Him in all the parts of our conscious existence, imposed, as the condition and law of our perfection, or of whom this Divine intervention and protection and deliverance are the promise. It is Master of our works, a Friend and Lover of our soul, an intimate Spirit of our life, an indwelling and over-dwelling Lord of all our personal and impersonal self and nature, who alone can utter to us this near and moving message."

D(2)—EGO IS THE CHIEF OBSTACLE IN SPIRITUAL PROGRESS. (XVIII—58 to 60.)

Great importance has been given to complete surrender and to constant conscious remembrance of the Divine for inviting Divine grace for spiritual uplift. Descent of such Grace eliminates root and branch, all obstacles and adverse forces that confront an aspirant in his forward spiritual march.

Ego is the greatest impediment operating as an involving principle against spiritual progress. We have to know what this ego principle is and how it can be transcended. Jivatma is the spiritual microcosm of the cosmic Divine. He retains pure spiritual character in the upper four spiritual planes from Sat plane to Mahar plane. In further manifestation he descends down in the lower three planes with which he deals as Pratyak Atma or lower self. This lower-self acts through the instrumentality of ego, mind, life and body. Life

principle first evolves the inconscient matter into plant kingdom and develops more and more in the animal kingdom Mind principle starts working imperceptibly in the animal but actively in man The dormant ego principle then begins to develop the sense of separate individuality in man stage by stage until his primitive heard instinct transforms him into an Asuric personality

Ego principle is a device of nature to fully develop sense of individuality and separate independent "I-ness" in man Unless this sense of "I ness" is developed, man cannot utilise his mental faculty for higher uplift At a certain stage of evolution, development of ego was a necessity for further evolution, and was at that stage a virtue. It uplifted him from Tamsic inertia into a full-fledged Rajsic personality As a result of painful experiences of Rajsic life he was obliged to turn his mind to find out ways and means to get over the afflictions and calamities of the world By a searching analysis he finds that his ego which was once helpful in developing his vital and mental nature, has now become the chief source of all evils of worldly existence He thus diverts his mind towards ethical, religious and spiritual uplift by dissolving his ego into the cosmic personality of Virat Purush.

Development of mental and desire ego tied to the physical body was thus a first great labour of the Cosmic Nature in its progressive evolution Dissolution of this limiting ego is indispensable to arrive at Divine realisation The ego by its nature brings contraction of consciousness, limitation of knowledge, disabling ignorance, diminution of power, incapacity, weakness, diversity in unity, disharmony, absence of love and sympathy, besides varieties of sufferings and calamities The ego must therefore either disappear or fuse into the Cosmic 'I' to enable one to enter into spiritual consciousness, and to attain eternal liberation.

This transformation becomes possible only by diversion of separative ego consciousness to unitary spiritual

consciousness. Since evolution is the Divine law of nature, total surrender and diversion of consciousness to the Divine brings down Divine aid and grace to enable the aspirant to safely transgress all obstructions, adverse forces, and other worldly sufferings that confront him in his spiritual march. But if he clings round his egoistic life, he remains constantly bound to his lower nature, resulting in his perpetual damnation and perdition. This is the crux of the advice which the Lord gave to Arjun to solve his dilemma about action or inaction on the life's battlefield of action (Kurukshetra).

To quote Shri Aurovindo, "The crux of the spiritual problem, the character of this transition of which it is so difficult for the normal mind of man to get a true apprehension, turns altogether upon the capital distinction between the ignorant life of the ego in the lower nature and the large luminous existence of the liberated being in his own true spiritual nature. This is the distinction on which the Gita dwells here with all possible emphasis. On the one side is this poor trepidant braggart egoistic condition of consciousness (Ahangkrita Bhava), the crippling narrowness of this little helpless separative personality, according to whose view-point we ordinarily think and act, feel and respond to the touches of existence. On the other are the vast spiritual reaches of immortal fullness, bliss and knowledge into which we are admitted through union with the Divine Being, of whom we are then a manifestation and expression in the eternal light, and no longer a disguise in the darkness of the ego-nature."

In the Synthesis of Yoga page 378, 379, Shri Aurovindo further says :—"We see in the teaching of the Gita how subtle a thing is the freedom from egoism which is demanded. Arjun is driven to fight by the egoism of strength, the egoism of the Kshatriya. He is turned from the battle by the contrary egoism of weakness, the shrinking, the spirit of disgust, the false pity that overcomes the mind,

the nervous being and the senses,—not that Divine compassion which strengthens the arm and clarifies the knowledge. But this weakness comes garbed as renunciation, as virtue." "Better the life of the beggar than to taste these blood-stained enjoyments ; I desire not the rule of all the earth, no nor the kingdom of the Gods." How foolish of the Teacher, we might say, not to confirm this mood, to lose this sublime chance of adding one more great soul to the army of Sanyasins, one more shining example before the world of a holy renunciation. But the Guide sees otherwise, the Guide who is not to be deceived by words. "This is weakness and delusion and egoism that speak in thee. Behold the Self, open thy eyes to the knowledge, purify thy soul of egoism." And afterwards, "fight, conquer, enjoy a wealthy kingdom." ·The criterion is within as the Geeta insists. It is to have the soul free from craving and attachment, but free from the attachment to inaction as well as from the egoistic impulse to action, free from attachment to the forms of virtue, as well as from the attraction to sin. It is to be rid of 'I-ness' and 'my-ness' so as to live in the one Self and act in the one Self, to reject the egoism of refusing to work through the individual centre of the universal being, as well as the egoism of serving the individual mind and life and body to the exclusion of others."

XVIII 58. The Lord says :—By absorption of your consciousness in the Divine, you shall overcome all difficulties and obstacles by My Grace. But if you do not listen to My advice out of egoism, you shall be doomed to perdition.

XVIII-59. If entrenched in egoism you resolve not to fight, such behaviour of yours will prove untrue, since your Rajsic nature will constrain you to indulge in fight.

XVIII-60. O Kaunteya, being bound by the natural impulse of action emerging out of your inner being, you shall be obliged inspite of yourself to perform that action from which you now desire to desist out of delusion.

D (3)—THE LORD REVOLVES CREATURES MECHANICALLY ON EGO'S WHEEL OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS (XVIII—61 & 62)

Ego is a mechanical device of Nature for evolution of creatures by moulding and remoulding their inner beings through recurring rounds on the wheel of births and deaths. The cosmic spiritual energy dynamises, regulates, sustains and controls the working of this mechanical wheel. As the Geeta says it is this Spiritual Nature (Para-Prakriti) that sustains and maintains the working of this dynamic existence (Dharyate Jagata). Lower nature of ego, mind and senses operates as the active energy, but the Spiritual Nature is its dynamo controlled by its Lord the Sagun Divine. This dynamic Kshar aspect is known as Ishwar aspect of Satchidanand. The Divine Chit or consciousness aspect manifests as cosmic Chit Shakti or cosmic energy personified as Universal Mother (Visheshwari) In relation to the Supreme Purushottam, She is His Adya Shakti the Primordial conscious energy. She carries the Divine in herself, and manifests as potential energy of the Nirguna Akshar Brahman and as kinetic energy of the Kshar Brahman. She manifests further as Mahat Buddhi (cosmic wisdom) or Supramental Pragya She is the mediator between the Eternal One and the manifested Many. She is Divine consciousness, Divine Power, Divine Light, Divine Knowledge, Divine Energy, and is the source of creation, preservation and renovation of the multiple existence.

In order to get rid of lower nature and of Ego's mechanical wheel of births and deaths, we must turn

towards the Mother, and substitute Her Spiritual Nature to work through us in place of the Ego's lower nature. Geeta lays special emphasis on complete surrender to the dynamic Ishwar aspect as a necessary step to secure Eternal peace of Nirguna Divine by His Grace. It may not be out of place to point out that in the Vedantic Divine Hierarchy this Ishwar aspect of the Trinity is allotted to the God Shiva also named as Mahesh (the great Lord) or Vishwat the Lord of the Universe. Shiva temples of India are therefore significantly named as abodes of Visheshwar, Bhuvaneshwar. Maheshwar, Onkareshwar, Ardh-Narishwar, Trambkeshwar, Rameshwar, Maha Kaleshwar, Kailash Eshwar, or of Somnath, Vishwanath, Pashupatinath, Amarnath, and Vaidyanath etc.

Shiva and His Shakti the Universal Mother are inseparably one. Shiva is therefore described as Ardh-Narishwar viz. half male and half female, Purush and Prakriti coupled together as one. It is this inseparable biune aspect of the Sagun Divine that is known as Iswar, and is adored by the Hindus as Bhawani and Shanker. Verse 61 lays stress on surrender to this Iswar aspect of the Sagun Brahman in order to secure His grace to attain Supreme Peace (Param Shantim) and Eternal Divine status (Shashwat Sthanam). Saint Tulsidas also lays stress on devotion to Bhawani and Shanker as a necessary step for realisation of the Supreme Divine. This view of his is based on his direct vision of a Spiritual fact, and is not a mere practical device to harmonise the then existing belligerent attitudes of Shaivites and Vaishnavites, as some modern pragmatic thinkers believe.

Realisation of the dynamic aspect is thus necessary and natural for the attainment of integral Divine realisation. Inner peace of Nirguna Divine and outer action of Saguna Divine are not incompatible. In fact such attitude in life is the supreme realisation of both Saguna and Nirguna aspects, in contrast to the partial realisation of Nirguna aspect alone by outer renunciation (Sanyas).

To quote Shri Aurovindo from The Synthesis of Yoga pages 462, 463—"This status of an inner passivity and an outer action independent of each other is a state of entire spiritual freedom. The Yogi, as the Gita says, even in acting does no actions, for it is not he, but Universal Nature directed by the Lord of Nature which is at work. He is not bound by his works nor do they leave any after effects or consequences in his mind, nor cling to or leave any mark on his soul.... Therefore, this would seem to be the poise, the uplifted soul ought to take, if it has still to preserve any relation with human action in the world existence, an unalterable silence, tranquility, passivity within, and action without, regulated by the Universal Will and Wisdom which works without being involved in, bound by, or ignorantly attached to its works. And certainly this poise of a perfect activity founded upon a perfect inner passivity is that which the Yogin has to possess."

This Biune Ishwar aspect of Shiva and Shakti dwells in the hearts of all creatures as the micro-cosmic Jiva. He moulds and evolves them gradually from material inconsciousness to spiritual consciousness by turning them round and round from birth to birth on the mechanical wheel of Ignorance (Maya). A spiritually advanced Yogi is the finished product of this potter's wheel. He realises that his self is really one and the same as Shiva, and ecstatically exclaims "Shivo Ham", "I am Shiva, I am bliss."

XVIII-61 The Lord says:—O Arjun, Ishwar (the Lord) dwells in the hearts of all creatures, and revolves them round and round as though mounted on a machine by means of Ignorance (Maya).

XVIII-62 O Bharat, surrender your self to the same Ishwar with all parts of your being, and as a result of His Grace, you shall attain Supreme Peace and eternal Divine status.

D(4)—SUPREME MYSTERY OF HIGHEST SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE. (XVIII—-63 to 66)

Surrender of the lower being to Sagun Ishwar has been pointed out as a great secret for attainment of highest Divine realisation This is a secret greater than all other secrets disclosed in previous chapters (Guhyatar). The Divine teacher now lays special stress on it and impresses upon His favourite disciple to fully bear it in mind for practice. Inorder that this master-key may no longer remain a mere mental concept, the Lord further reveals to him the greatest secret (Guhyatam) of all mystic experiences. Spiritual teachers reveal such secrets of mysticism only to deserving disciples and not to all and sundry. This is the reason why they are given out as most confidential communications, and so much stress is laid on their secrecy. They are disclosed to Arjun because he was the dearest deserving disciple of the Lord.

This supreme secret of all secrets is revealed to raise Arjun's consciousness from mental level as well as from supramental level of Gnosis (Vigyan) to the Supreme Divine consciousness. Even the highest evolution of mental levels of intution, inspiration and even revelation does not raise a man above the separative characteristic of mental region. Further evolution of the supra-mental consciousness of Vigyan-maya kosh is the primal condition for attaining unitary consciousness of the Cosmic Divine.

Human constitution is a complex texture of sheaths of various levels of consciousness. Physical body (Ann-maya Kosh) is the exterior sheath, which mechanically works out diverse impulses of the involved mental, vital and other sheaths. Over-lapping and co-existing with the physical sheath are the subtler and subtlers sheaths

(1) of vitality and desire (Pran-may Kosh),
(2) of mind (Mano-may Kosh),
(3) of Vigyan or Divine Knowledge (Vigyan-May Kosh), and
(4) of Spiritual Bliss (Anand-may Kosh).

These sheaths are subtler and subtler levels of consciousnesses, the highest Anand-may being that of the Divine consciousness and Divine Bliss.

Man has so far evolved consciousness of physical sheath, vital sheath and partly of mental sheath. He generally lives in the consciousness of physical and desire mind, and has yet to evolve higher mental levels of intution, inspiration, revelation and over-mind etc. Beyond the consciousness of the highest mental level, there is still the yet dormant consciousness of Vigyan-may Kosh of Supramental Gnosis (Pragya). Great stress is laid in the Geeta for union with this Pragya consciousness (Buddhi Yoga) in order to attain Divine consciousness of Anand-may kosh.

Development of these subtle consciousnesses step by step is the most natural climb on the Divine Ladder, and this is the process which the Geeta advocates with great emphasis, and with a solemn pledge of integral Divine realisation by Spiritual identity. Complete surrender to the Sagun Ishwar aspect transforms a mental being into a supra-mental being of Vigyan consciousness. Awakening of this Vigyan Consciousness completely reverses the ordinary separative mental out-look, and transforms it into unitary Vigyan out-look.

Difference between the ordinary mental out-look and the ineffable Vigyan out-look is beautifully described by Shri Aurovindo in "Synthseis of Yoga" pages 549-550, a few extracts of which are given below :

"The mental being even in the intuitive mind can perceive the truth only by a brilliant reflection or limited communication and subject to the restrictions and the inferior capacity of the mental vision, but the Supramental being sees it by the Gnosis itself, from the very centre, and outwelling fount of the truth, in its very form and by its own spontaneous and self-illumining process. For, the Vigyan is a direct and Divine as opposed to an indirect and human knowledge......The mental reason proceeds with

labour from ignorance to truth, but the Gnosis (*Vigyan*) has in itself the direct contact, the immediate vision, the easy and constant possession of the truth, and has no need of seeking or any kind of procedure."

"The reason starts with appearances and labours to arrive at the truth behind them ; it shows the truth in the light of appearances. The gnosis starts from the truth and shows the appearances in the light of the truth. It is itself the body of the truth and its spirit. The reason proceeds by inference, it concludes ; but the Gnosis proceeds by identity or vision It is, sees and knows.·······To the reason only what the senses give is direct knowledge (Pratyaksha), the rest of truth is arrived at indirectly. To the Gnosis all its truth is direct knowledge. Therefore, the truth gained by the intellect is an acquision, over which there hangs always a certain shadow of doubt.···The truth of the Gnosis is free from doubt, self-evident, self-existent, irrefragable."

"The reason has as its first instrument observation general, analytical and synthetic. It aids itself by comparison, contrast and analogy. It proceeds from experience to indirect knowledge by logical processes of deduction, induction, all kinds of inference. It rests upon memory, *reaches out beyond itself by imagination, secures itself by* judgement. All is a process of grouping and seeking. The Gnosis does not seek, it possesses, it reveals, it illumines ... The slow and stumbling logical process from reasoning to conclusion is pushed out by a swift intuitive proceeding."

"The reason dwells in the diversity and is its prisoner. It deals with things separately and treats each as a separate existence. It sees unity only in a sum or by elimination of diversity, or as a general conception and a vacant figure. But the Gnosis dwells in the unity, and knows by it all the nature of the diversities. It starts from the unity and sees diversities only of a unity, not diversities constituting the one, but a unity constituting, its own multitudes. The reason deals with the finite, and is helpless before the

infinite. ...But the Gnosis is, sees and lives in the infinite. It starts always from the infinite and knows finite things only in their relation to the infinite and in the sense of the infinite.···If you describe the Gnosis as it is its own awareness, it is hardly possible to speak of it except in figures and symbols.''

This transformation of mental consciousness by union with the supramental consciousness of Vigyan-may kosh (Buddhi Yoga), is the penultimate stage of supreme realisation. It creates suitable condition for ascent of the aspirant into the highest bilssful consciousness of Anand-may kosh. In the Synthesis of Yoga, page 553 Sri Aurobindo says, "First we must remember that 'the Gnostic level, Mahat, Vigyan, is not the supreme plane of our consciousness, but a middle or link plane. Interposed between the triune glory of the utter spirit, infinite existence (Sat), consciousness (Chit), and bliss (Anand) of the Eternal, and our lower triple being and nature, it is as if it stood these as the mediating, formulated organising and creative wisdom, power and joy of the Eternal. In the Gnosis, Satchidanand gathers up the light of His unseizable existence, and pours it out on the soul in the shape and power of a Divine Knowledge, a Divine Will and a Divine Bliss of existence."

Consciousness of Supramental Gnosis or Vigyan spiritualises the mental, vital and physical consciousness. Egoistic mind is transformed into divinised mind (Man-mana) which becomes a free channel of divine thought and will, vital emotional heart is transformed into spiritual emotional (mad-bhakta), egoistic physical becomes a channel of divine Yagna or Cosmic action (Madyaji). Thus the entire lower triple being of man becomes spiritualised and wholly dedicated and surrendered to the Divine (Mam-namaskuru) Karma Yoga, Gyan Yoga and Bhakti Yoga thus become an integrated radiation, resulting in spiritual identity of the aspirant with both Sagun and Nirgun aspects of the Divine. A safe entrance in the realms of the Transcendent Spirit is thus solemnly assured

Such a pledge by the Lord to Arjun became nezessary to root out hıs dılemma about the superıor efficacy of mental wıthdrawl (Tyag) over physıcal wıthdrawal (Sanyas) to achıeve thıs supreme goal

A sanyasın, who physıcally wıthdraws from the world, treatıng the dynamıc Ishwar aspect as a snare, tries dırectly to step up to the hıghest Spırıtual rung of the Dıvıne ladder, ıgnorıng and overpassıng the ıntermedıate rung of Supra-mental gnosıs of Vıgyan He thus faıls to supramentalıse hıs mental, vıtal and physıcal sheaths and there always remaıned a lurkıng danger of hıs downfall, when he descends from hıs Nırvıkalpa samadhı to ordınary mental level Hıs ascent ınto perfect Dıvıne Conscıousness by ıdentıty cannot thus be assured. Thus a sanyasın, ınspıte of Nırgun realısatıon, retaıns the separatıve mental outlook as ıts uplıft ıs neglected Mental outlook ıs separatıve even ın the hıghest levels whıle the gnosıs or vıgyan outlook ıs unıtary and therefore, an ındıspensable condıtıon of Dıvıne Experıence

In case of spırıtualısıng the mental, vıtal and physıcal conscıousness, multıple Dharmas or laws of actıon of these lower bodıes are surrendered and are replaced by the Dıvıne Law or dharmı. Entıre beıng of yogı ıs transformed ınto Dıvıne Beıng and no questıon of sın or vırtue arıses ın the conduct of such realısed person He abandons all the lower law͵ of pragmatıc dutıes (Dhırma) and substıtutes them by the Dıvıne dharma. Swamı Vıvekananda says "There must be freedom from all belıefs ın duty·· The only duty ıs to be unattached and work as free beıng to gıve up all work unto God" Shrı Aurovındo ın the Message of Gıta explaıns thıs ıdea thus

"Thıs lıberatıng actıon ıs of the character of works done ın a profound unıon of the wıll and all the dynamıc parts of our nature wıth the Dıvıne ın ourselves and the cosmos It ıs done first as a sacrıfice wıth the ıdea stıll of ourselve͵ as the doer. It ıs done next wıthout that ıdea and wıth a

perception of the Prakriti as the sole doer. It is done last with the knowledge of that Prakriti as the supreme power of the Divine and a renunciation, a surrender of all our actions to him with the individual as a channel only and an instrument. Our works then proceed straight from the Self and the Divine within us, are a part of the indivisible universal action, are initiated and performed not by us but by a vast transcendent Shakti All that we do is done for the sake of the Lord seated in the heart of all, for the Godhead in the individual and for the fulfilment of his will in us, for the sake of the Divine in the world, for the good of all beings for the fulfilment of the world action and the world purpose or in one word, for the sake of the Purushottama and done really by him through his universal Shakti. These divine works whatever their form or outward character, cannot bind but are rather a potent means for rising out of his lower Prakriti of the three gunas to the perfection of the Supreme, divine and spiritual nature. Disengaged from these mixed and limited dharmas we escape into the immortal dharma which comes upon us when we make ourselves one in all our consciousness and action with the Purushottama. The oneness here brings with it the power to rise there into the immortality beyond time. There we shall exist in his eternal transcendence"

In the Synthesis of Yoga, Shri Aurovindo had further elucidated this point beautifully

"The Vigyan takes up the will and puts it first into harmony and then into oneness with the truth of these supramental knowledge In this knowledge, the idea in the individual is one with the idea in the universal, because both are brought back to the truth of supreme Knowledge and the transcendent Will. The gnosis takes up not only our intelligent will, but our wishes, desires, even what we call the lower desires, the instincts, the impulses, the reachings out of sense and sensation and it transforms them They

cease to be wishes and desires, because they cease first to be personal and then cease to be that struggling after the ungrasped which we mean by craving and desire No longer blind or half blind reaching out of the instinctive or intelligent mentality, they are transformed into a various action of the Truth will, and that will act with an inherent knowledge of the right measures of its decreed action and therefore, with an effectivity unknown to our mental willing Therefore too in the action of the Vigyanmaya will, there is no place for sin, for all sin is an error of the will a desire and act of the Ignorance.

When desire ceases entirely, grief and all inner suffering also cease. The Vigyan takes up not only our parts of knowledge and will, but our parts of affection and delight and changes them into action of the divine Ananda For if knowledge and force are the twin sides or powers of the action of consciousness, delight, Anand which is something higher than what we call pleasure is the very stuff of consciousness and the natural result of the interaction of knowlegde and will, force and self awareness Both pleasure and pain, both joy and grief are deformations caused by the disturbance of harmony between our consciousness and the force it applies, between our knowledge and will, a breaking up of their oneness by a descent to a lower plane in which they are limited, divided in themselves, restrained from their full and proper action, at odds with other force, other consciousness other knowledge, other will"

On page 315 of Synthesis of Yoga, Shri Aurovindo says "In proportion as we are purified, the true being within declares itself more clearly, our will is less entangled in suggestions from outside or shut up in our own superficial mental constructions Egoism renounced, the nature purified, action will come from the soul s dictates, from the depths or the heights of the spirit, or it will be openly governed by the Lord who was all the time seated secretly within our hearts. The supreme and final word of the Geeta for the Yogin is that he should leave all conventional

formulas of belief and action, all fixed and external rules of conduct, all constructions of the outward surface Nature, Dharmas, and take refuge in the Divine alone Free from desire and attachment, one with all beings, living in the infinite Truth and Purity and acting out of the profoundest deeps of his inner consciousness, governed by his immortal, divine and highest Self, all his works will be directed by the Power within through that essential spirit and nature in us which, knowing, warring, working, loving, serving, is always divine, towards the fulfilment of God in the world, an expression of the Eternal in Time".

The last stage is that of Anandmaya kosha Consciousness of supramental gnosis of Vigyan further involves consciousness of *Anandmayakosha. Consciousness of Anand-maya-*kosha thus evolved, man becomes God possessed.

Experience of this final Transformation of the devotee from Supramental gnosis into the divinised Spiritual identity is stated indescribable in human language and seers have expressed it in symbological terminology I may quote with advantage what Shri Aurovindo felt in his deep spiritual search and rendered that ineffable experience expressible

"In *its infinite* consciousness, the gnostic soul creates a sort of voluntary limitation for its own wisdom purposes, it has even its particular luminous aura of being in which it moves, although beyond that it enters into all things and identifies itself with all being and all existences. In the *Ananda all is reversed,* the centre disappears. In the bliss nature there is no centre, nor any voluntary or imposed circumference, but all is, all are one equal being, one identical spirit The bliss soul finds and feels itself everywhere, it has no mansion, is aniketa, or has the *all* for its *mansion,* or, *if* it likes, it has all things for its many mansions open to each other for ever. All other selves are entirely its own selves, in action as well as in essence. The joy of contact in diverse oneness becomes altogether the joy

of absolute identity in innumerable oneness. Existence is no longer formulated in the terms of the knowledge, because the known and knowledge and the knower are wholly oneself here and, since all possesses all in an intimate identity beyond the closest closeness, there is no need of what we call knowledge All the consciousness is of the bliss of the Infinite, all power is power of the bliss of the Infinite, all forms and activities are forms and activities of the bliss of the Infinite"

"The soul lives it is not abolished, it is not lost in a featureless Indefinite. For on every plane of our existence the same principle holds, the soul may fall asleep in a trance of self-absorption, dwells in an ineffable intensity of God possession, live in the highest glory of its own plane,—the Anand loka, Brahma-loka, Baikuntha, Go-loka of various Indian systems, even turned upon the lower worlds to fill them with its own light and power and beautitude"

"The Divine on the Ananda plane is not incapable of a world-play or self debarred from any expression of its glories On the contrary, as the Upnishad insists, the Ananda is the true creative principle For all takes birth from this divine Bliss, all is pre-existent in it as an absolute truth of existence which the Vigyan brings out and subjects to voluntary limitation by the Idea and the law of the idea. In the Anand all law ceases and there is an absolute freedom without binding term or limit"

"Since there is on this plane the absolute and the play of absolutes, it is ineffable by any of the conceptions of our mind or by signs of the phenomenal or ideal realities of which mind conceptions are the figures in our intelligence. These realities are themselves indeed only relative symbols of those ineffable absolutes The symbol, the expressive reality may give an idea, a perception, sense, vision, contact even of the thing itself to us, but at last we get beyond it to the thing it symbolises, transcend idea, vision, contact, pierce through the ideal and pass to the real

realities, the identical, the supreme, the timeless and eternal, the infinitely infinite "

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद् गुह्यतरं मया ।
विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥ ६३ ॥

XVIII-63 The Lord thus says —Thus this wisdom, a secret greater than all *secrets has been revealed by Me* to you. Deeply and fully refl ct on it and then act as you desire

सर्वगुह्यतमं भयः श्रृणु मे परमं वचः ।
इष्टोऽसि मे दृढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥ ६४ ॥

XVIII-64 Again hear My Supreme Word, the greatest of all *secrets Since you are intimately beloved to Me,* I will speak it to you for your benefit

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मा नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥ ६५ ॥

XVIII-65. Merge your mind into Divine mind (Manmana), your heart's vital emotion into Divine Emotion and to devotion (Mad-bhakto), and your physical activity into Divine Cosmic sacrifice (Madyaji) Thus surrendering your entire being to the Divine (Namaskuru), you shall truly reach the Supreme Divine As you are dear to Me, I give you My true and solemn pledge.

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥ ६६ ॥

XVIII-66 Abandoning all dharmas or duties of the lower being, *take refuge solely in* Me and I will deliver you from all sins. Do not be perplexed any more.

XVIII-67. Let this not be spoken by you to one governed by his lower nature devoid of askesis, devotion and service, not the least to him who despises and belittles Me (lodged in the human body)

XVIII-68. Undoubtedly that devotee will come to Me who shall proclaim this message of supreme secret to My other devotees

XVIII-69. No other man can do better than he who is most dear to Me and no other man can be dearer to Me than he in this world.

XVIII-70. One who shall study this sacred discourse of Mine, by him shall I be worshipped with the offering and sacrifice of knowledge.

XVIII 71 One who with faith and without scepticism listens to this discourse, also gets liberated and attains the happy world of the righteous

XVIII-72 Have you heard this, O, son of Partha with a concentrated mind ? Has your delusion caused by ignorance been cleared O, Dhananjaya ?

XVIII-73. Arjun said . My delusion is destroyed and knowledge regained through Your Grace, O immutable One My doubts are dispelled and now I am resolute and firm I shall act according to your words

XVIII-74. Sanjay said : I heard this marvellous dialogue of Vasudeva and great Partha and as a result my hair stands.

XVIII-75 It was the grace of Vyasa that I heard this supreme secret of this Yoga directly from Lord Krishna, the divine Master of this Yoga, who himself declared it

XVIII-76. O King, remembering, remembering this marvellous and sacred dialogue between Keshava and Arjun, I rejoice again and again

XVIII-77 Remembering, remembering, also that most marvellous form of Hari, great is my astonishment, O King I rejoice again and again

XVIII 78. Wherever is Krishna, the Master of Yoga, wherever is Partha, the archer, assured are there glory,

victory and prosperity, and also there is the immutable Law of Right.

Know then yourself; know your trueself to be God and one with the selves of all others; know your soul to be a portion of God. Live in what you know; live in the self, live in your supreme spiritual nature, be united with God and Godlike. Offer, first, all your actions as a sacrifice to the Highest and the One in you and to the Highest and the One in the world; deliver last all you are and do into his hands for the supreme and universal Spirit to do through you his own will and works in the world.

(Sri Aurobindo in The Message of the Gita)

Thus ends Chapter XVIII entitled "Moksha Sanyas Yoga."

—GEETA VIHAR ENDS—